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13 issues of Fast Car are published per annum
UK annual subscription price: £64.87
Europe annual subscription price: £78.00
USA annual subscription price: £78.00
Rest of World annual subscription price: £84.00

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Toll free USA subscription orderline: 1-888-777-0275
UK customer service team: 01959 543 747
Customer service email address: subs@kelsey.co.uk
Customer service and subscription postal address:
Fast Car Customer Service Team
Kelsey Publishing Ltd
Cudham Tithe Barn,
Berry's Hill, Cudham,
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PRINTING

William Gibbons & Sons Ltd

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ED START

Issue 407 May 2019

Hybrids and EVs split opinions. Hardcore petrolheads refuse to accept them. This is crazy. The performance advantages are phenomenal. The power delivery is mind-bending, because you get all of the power all of the time (well, until the batteries go flat. But you know what I mean). In fact, some drag strips in the States have banned EVs from competing against combustion-powered cars, because they're winning everything.

Yes, I completely get the fact they don't make sexy V8 noises and spit flames out of the exhausts, but to dismiss them completely is silly. And it's good to see that the aftermarket tuning industry is embracing them too, including the biggest name in aero styling today. Yes, those crazy guys from Liberty Walk might primarily make kits for fire-breathing supercars, but they're not ignoring the hybrid market. The i8 on the cover is the work of Liberty Walk Europe and it's the first one of its kind in the UK. Judging by the reaction this thing gets, it certainly won't be the last.

Don't worry though, we've not forgotten our roots. In fact the other main car in this issue was a Fast Car favourite back in the '90s. I am of course talking about the Vauxhall Nova. We don't see many modified versions of these hatches anymore, mainly because there's not many of them about, and those that are, aren't normally enhanced in today's Fast Car style. But this one has been. It even boasts a custom air-suspension set-up!

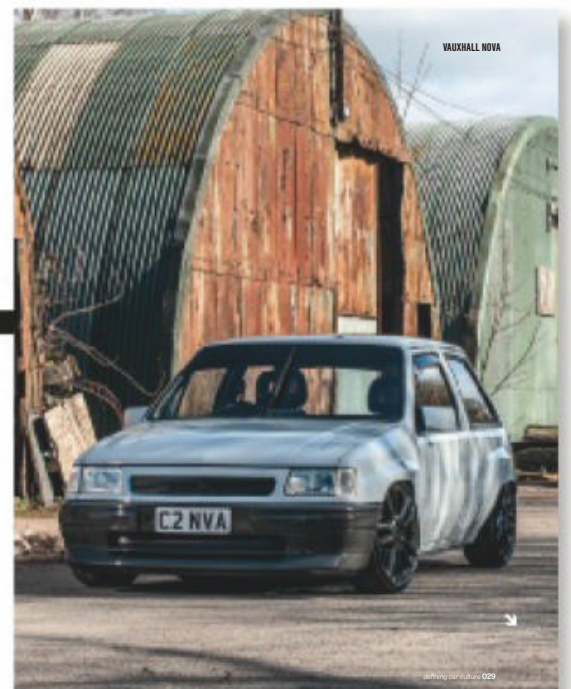
There's plenty more life left in the combustion engine yet, but the future is definitely electric. If you're sceptical about hybrids and EVs, I'd urge you to try one before forming your opinions. And when I say try one, I mean a proper one. Not an old Prius or Leaf. They really are pants!

Big Love,
Slim Jules

Jules

Feature of the Month:

Feature Of The Month: It's never an easy choice, as if I didn't like any of the features in this magazine I wouldn't run them. But purely for personal nostalgia reasons I'm going to go for the Nova. I love the way owner Nathan has mixed old and new styles, and my first car was a Nova, so it has taken me back to the good old days when I had hair and a social life.



Next Issue on sale 26 • 4 • 2019



SLIM JULES
EDITOR

"My favourite hybrid? That's a tough choice. But I'll have two LaFerraris please."



MIDGE
CONTRIBUTING
EDITOR

"It's got to be the Tesla Model S P100D. 0-60 in 2.5-seconds! Yes please."



INITIAL G
ART EDITOR

"The Uber I got home from the pub in last week. Though I can't remember what it was."



GLENDA
WEBSITE EDITOR

"It's got to be the Remington Contour MB4030. We are talking beard trimmers, right?"

012



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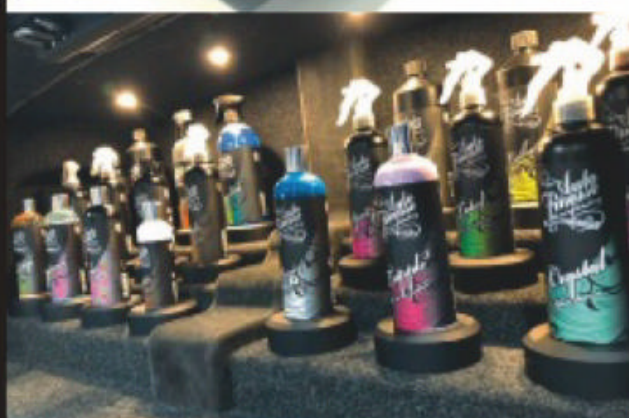
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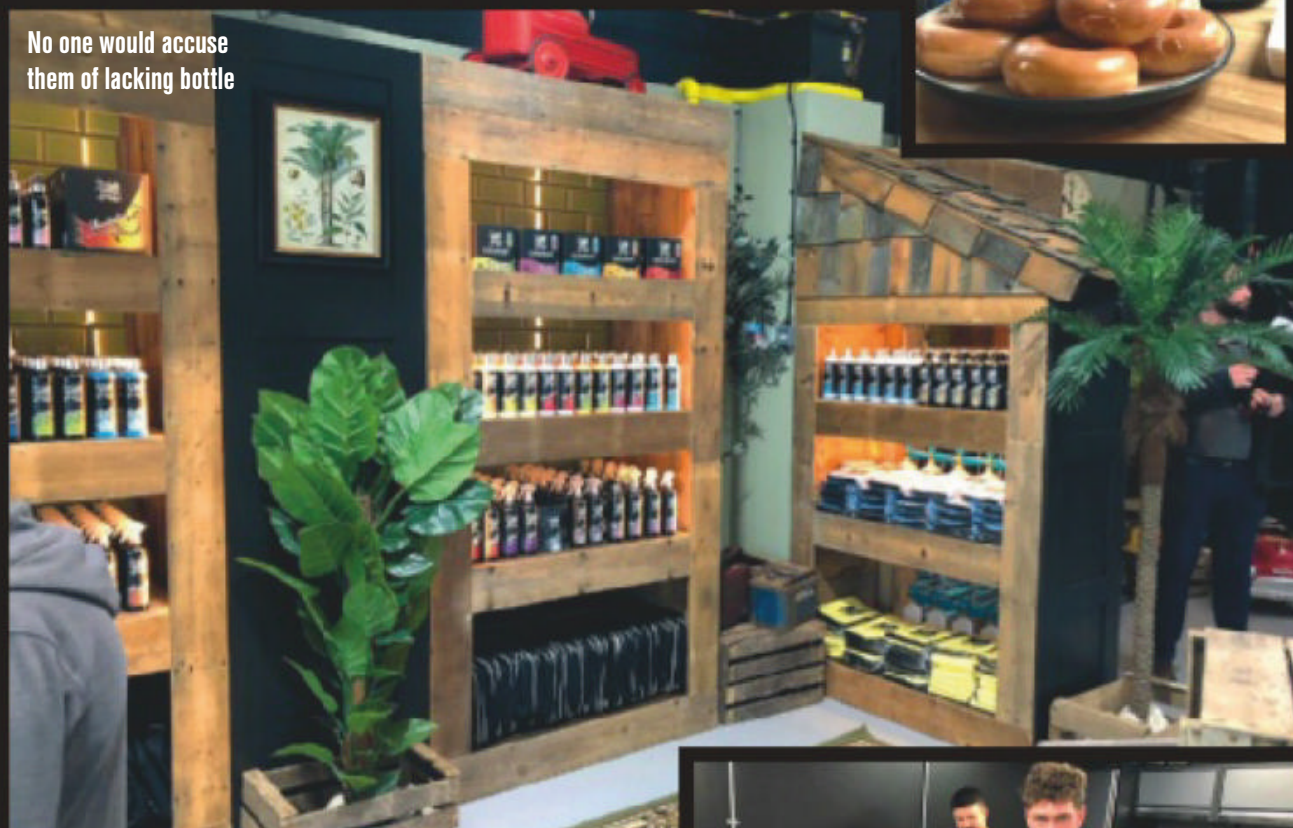
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UP FRONT



No one would accuse them of lacking bottle



Auto Finesse Detailing Academy is **OPEN**

We're not really morning people here at Fast Car Towers. So when we have to get up early, especially on a Sunday, it has to be for a good reason. And we had one of those a few weeks back when the guys and girls at Auto Finesse invited us down to the grand opening of their latest venture, the Detailing Academy. Not only that, but we'd heard rumours they'd spent £185 on Krispy Kreme doughnuts for the occasion – which made getting out of bed that little bit easier.

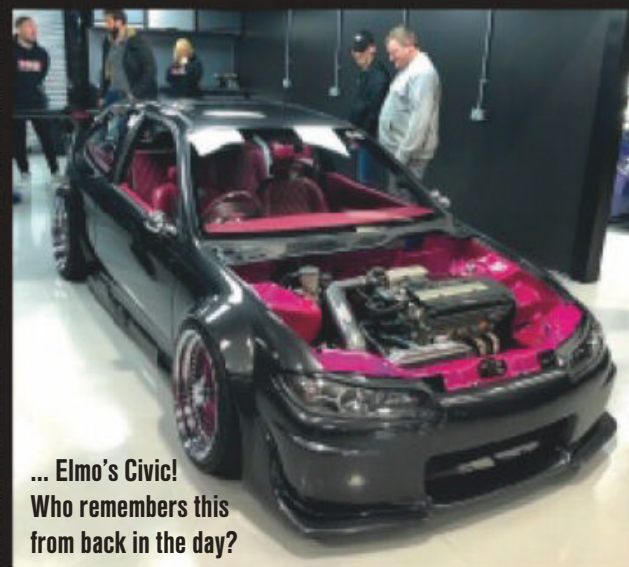
As to be expected, the opening was pretty damn busy and it gave the guys at Auto Finesse the perfect opportunity to show off the Academy to the industry's leading players, experts and, erm, us.



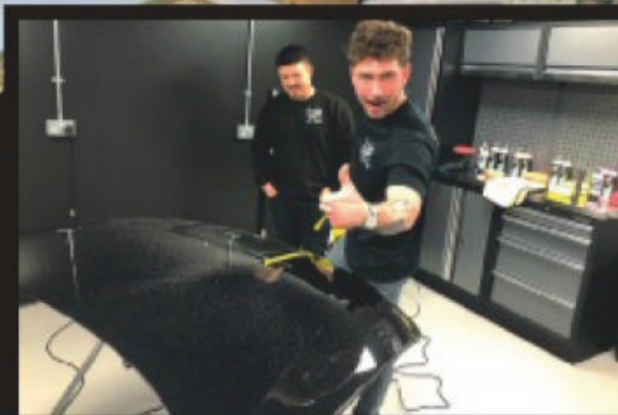
Andrew Britton's M4 has had a refresh and so has...

Auto Finesse is one of the biggest names in detailing, especially amongst us modifiers, and offer one of the most comprehensive and respected product ranges in the industry. As the range has grown, so too has the need to educate their customers and dealers on how to get the very best out of them. This is where the idea of the Detailing Academy has come from.

Just before we made ourselves sick on Original Glazed Krispy Kremes, we caught up with AF's head honcho, Mr James Batty...



... Elmo's Civic! Who remembers this from back in the day?



Q) So James, what is AF's Detailing Academy?

A) It's a place for car enthusiast with a keen passion for car care to come and learn about Auto Finesse products and how to use them.

Q) So a school for detailing?

A) Kind of. But less boring. And we don't give out detentions.

Q) So how do you get involved?

A) Well there's going to be two main routes: educational group sessions; and one-to-one, detail what you bring courses.

Q) What level do you need to be at to attend a group session?

A) We've split the sessions into three different skill sets: Enthusiast, which is basically an introduction to detailing; Advanced, for the finer art of detailing; and Professional, which is our flagship five-day course which will turn you into a master in the art of detailing.

Q) How much will these cost?

A) Prices start at £295 for the group sessions, while the DWYB days are £395.

Q) And do you get a free Krispy Kreme for that?

A) Trust you to ask that! Yes, lunch is laid on. But Krispy Kremes are subject to availability!

Q) Thanks, James. Where should people go if they want more information?

A) For more details and to book a place on a course, simply hit www.autofinesse.co.uk/academy.



LAMBO'S HURACÁN EVO BREAKS COVER, AND IT'S GODDAMN RIDICULOUS

Lamborghinis have to be a bit mental. That's the point. If you want your supercar to be ruthlessly efficient and uncompromising, you buy a Ferrari. If you also want everyone to be a bit scared of you, you get a Lambo instead. These are silly cars for dangerous people. Always have been.

With the Gallardo, however, all of this changed. Sure, it was a hysterically fast and noisy car, but the styling was more toned-down, more subdued. It was the least terrifying Lamborghini ever built. However, it shifted over 14,000 units, the firm's biggest-selling model ever by quite a massive margin. So when the Gallardo's replacement, the Huracán, arrived in 2014, did it continue to play it safe? Yes and no. It was more aggressive-looking, as well as being faster and more agile. But there were still critics who felt it wasn't Lambo loopy enough.

And that's where the new-for-2019 Huracán Evo comes in. It may be the entry-level Lamborghini, but this mid-cycle model update has created a monster. 631bhp and 0-62mph in 2.9 seconds don't exactly whisper 'entry-level'. And there's plenty more going on across the spec sheets. The Evo features comprehensively reworked spoilers, bumper profiles and aero to suck the thing down to the ground,

providing seven times as much downforce as the earlier Huracán. The exhausts have been moved way up above the diffuser just to ensure they're really bellowing at people. It's got the four-wheel steering system pinched from the Aventador, as well as the company's first ever all-wheel torque vectoring system, making it six seconds quicker around Nardò than the car it replaces. Oh yes, and Lamborghini's engineers have started talking about 'feed forward' – this is like driver feedback working in reverse, whereby the car learns the details of your driving style and adjusts the power delivery, throttle response, torque split and handling to pre-empt your inputs.



They've also installed an 8.4-inch touchscreen just above the fighter-jet starter button, which allows you to minutely adjust chassis and power settings while you're driving along. Which is a really good way to find yourself ploughing through a hedge at 200mph.

So yes, it's safe to say the Huracán Evo is every bit as ridiculous as a Lamborghini is meant to be.



M3 GOES 4WD... BUT IT'S NOT FOR OFF-ROADING

Car enthusiasts tend to have mixed feelings about BMW's M division when it comes to the brand's 4WD variants. There was a time we believed that they obviously couldn't build an M X5. That name's already taken, plus it'd just be a daft idea. But then the X5 M arrived and turned out to be a massive seller, so now we've also got an X4 M and X3 M to think about.

You can draw your own conclusions about these. But the fact of the matter is that the M badge champions are collecting data all the time about how performance and AWD go hand-

in-hand – look at the latest F90-generation M5, that's proudly rocking a rear-biased four-wheel drive system... and it looks like the next M3 will be going the same way. Set to debut at the Frankfurt Motor Show later this year, BMW have been loose-lipped with the spoilers, strongly hinting that the all-new 3.0-litre twin-turbo straight-six we see in the X3/4 M will find its way into the M3 – along with the xDrive system. But don't panic just yet: the M5 has a rear-drive-only mode, so you can still drift it. If the M division have any sense, the M3 will too...

Appreciating Depreciation **Ford Crown Victoria Police Interceptor**

Then: **£27,000**
Now: **£5,000**

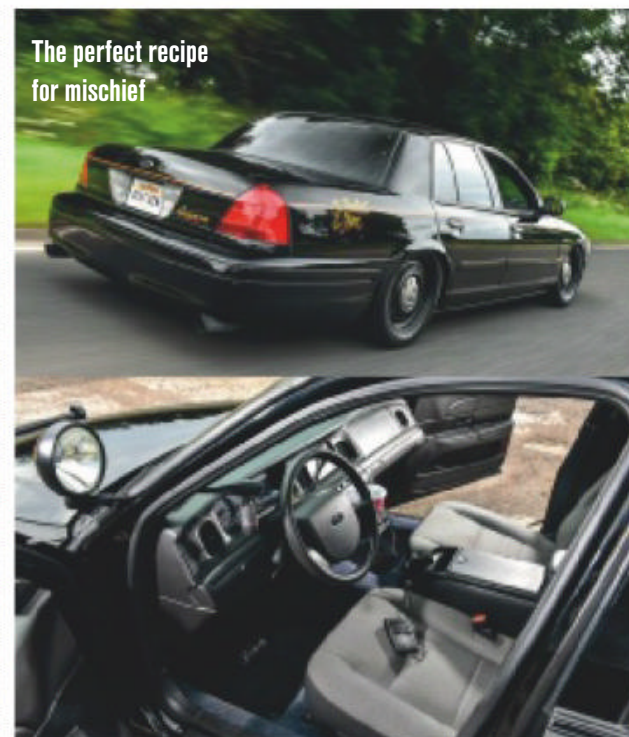


Nee-naah, nee-naah...

If you've visited the United States, there's a good chance the first car you travelled in was a Ford Crown Victoria Police Interceptor. Not that we're implying you're some kind of drugs mule or gun-runner. Simply that these specced-up Crown Vics often get converted into taxis when they reach the end of their operational life with the feds. Although interestingly, this conversion seldom involves ungluing the Police Interceptor badge from the boot!

The regular Crown Victoria was a popular model in its own right in the US, but the Police-spec variant is just cooler. You've seen them

on the silver screen skidding about the place and flipping over in pretty much every movie you've ever watched – imagine being able to inject a little of that manic cool into your daily commute! Owning an ex-cop cruiser packing a V8 should definitely be on your bucket list. The body-on-frame construction made them attractive to police forces, as it makes collision repairs easier without necessarily having to straighten the chassis and, while never officially sold new to the public in cop trim, they made their way onto the second-hand market when the rozzers were done with them – and a fair few have been imported to the UK since.



The perfect recipe for mischief

Top 5 mods: ▲

Air-ride, Roush supercharger, Stainless Works exhausts, megaphone, searchlights

The Police Interceptor came with a beefed-up heavy-duty transmission, 'severe duty' shock absorbers, stainless steel exhaust and black steel wheels. And, of course, a sodding great 4.6-litre V8 and rear-wheel-drive. It's the perfect recipe for mischief. It's got reliability and durability baked in. And people will get a little nervous when they catch sight of you in their rear-view mirror. Whoop whoop, it's the sound of... er, some dude in a large saloon car.

HENNESSEY MAKES A FAST CAR *MUCH, MUCH, MUCH FASTER* – AGAIN

John Hennessey has some pretty serious form when it comes to taking fast cars and turning their amps up to 11. The Hennessey Venom GT was essentially a stretched Lotus Exige with a massive V8 in it, which could accelerate from 0-200mph in 14.5-seconds. There have been numerous bonkers projects since, and the latest is John's take on the McLaren 600LT. He fancied making it faster than the recently announced Speedtail hypercar – just for the sake of it, really – and there's a variety of upgrade packages available.

The 708bhp pack gives you 0-62mph in 2.6 seconds, the 805bhp option shaves two-tenths off that figure, and for the truly unhinged there's the HPE1000 spec, which gives you 1,001bhp (the last 1 is all-important), 865lb/ft, and 0-62mph in 2.1s. So if you've bought yourself a Big Mac Longtail and it doesn't feel fast enough; a) you're mental, and b) you should give John a call.



A car that's nippier than yours



LA VOITURE NOIRE



The Bugatti Type 57 SC Atlantic is the sort of car that gets concours judges and billionaire collectors hot under the collar. Ralph Lauren, a man of impeccable style, had one in his collection reportedly worth over \$40m. So when Bugatti themselves put out the message that they're building a one-off modern reimagining of the Atlantic, the moneyed motoring world listens.

Launched at this year's Geneva Motor Show, this rakish new model is called simply La Voiture Noire which you'll know simply means 'the black car'. Yep, these guys like to be understated, because they're well aware they don't have to show off about this car. It speaks for itself, in low grumbling

tones which suggest it kinda wants to rip your heart right out if only it weren't so busy sunbathing. Its malevolent all-carbon fibre curves echo the styling cues of the Chiron but take the concept to a whole other place, with a massive horseshoe grille at one end, no-nonsense BUGATTI badging at the other, and a mind-warping fusion of curves and sharp creases in between. With the Chiron's 8.0-litre W16 engine imbuing it with a frankly absurd 1,500bhp, the trump card La Voiture Noire plays is its exclusivity. Bugatti are only building this one. Just because they can. And it's already found a buyer. Indeed, at £14.4m it's the most expensive new car ever sold by quite some margin.



THE ANGRY MAN

Bitching about car TV shows is just about the dumbest thing a person can do.

Back in the day we only had four channels and it was properly exciting when a bit of WRC coverage came on, or the F1 or some rallycross. Because most of the time there wasn't a lot on. That's why WRC rallying used to be so much more popular in the seventies and eighties than it is now. It got proper mainstream TV coverage and it was better than watching sodding Songs Of Praise. But nowadays we've got a ridiculous amount of choice of things to watch – hundreds of channels on Sky, Virgin, BT, along with Netflix and Amazon Prime, plus countless dedicated car channels on YouTube and loads more besides. Every minute of every day you can find an old Top Gear rerun on Dave, or a bit of Car S.O.S. or Turbo Pickers or Fast N' Loud. We've never had it so good.

And what do people do? Piss and moan, that's what. You've got one bunch of people watching The Grand Tour and saying it's not as good as Top Gear used to be. And another bunch watching new Top Gear and saying it's worse than The Grand Tour. And then a whole load of shitty forum threads and Facebook bollocks about how programmes like Lazy Boy Garage and Goblin Works aren't heavyweight enough. And don't even get me started on all the bellends whining about Wheeler Dealers.

Yeah yeah, you saw something on TV and you didn't like it. But what about the man holding the gun to your head and forcing you to watch it – did he enjoy it? Oh, what's that, you watched it of your own free will? Shut up then. Find something else to do. Nobody cares whether you like Top Gear or not.

WHAT'S ON APRIL 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6 Goodwood Members Meeting →
7 → Haynes Breakfast Club, Haynes Motor Museum	8 Fuektopia, Ace Café	9	10 Midge goes to Butlins	11	12	13
14 Full-On Ford, Crail Raceway 14th April, Elsecar At The Races, Doncaster Racecourse	15	16	17	18	19 Modified Nationals, Stoneleigh Park 14th April, Wheels Day, Alton Towers	20
21 → Simply Audi, Beaulieu Motor Museum	22	23	24 InCarNation Show in Shine, Ace Café	25	26 FAST car Issue 408 On Sale	27 Car Audio Security Open Day →
28 Car Audio Security Open Day →	29	30				

The Grand Tour – Amazon Prime – Fridays • Car S.O.S. – Nat Geo HD – Thursdays • Top Gear – BBC Two – Sundays
BTCC – Brands Hatch – ITV4 – 6th-7th April • BTCC – Donington Park – ITV4 – 26th-28th April • China Grand Prix – Sky Sports F1 HD – 12th-14th April
Azerbaijan Grand Prix – Sky Sports F1 HD – 26th-28th April

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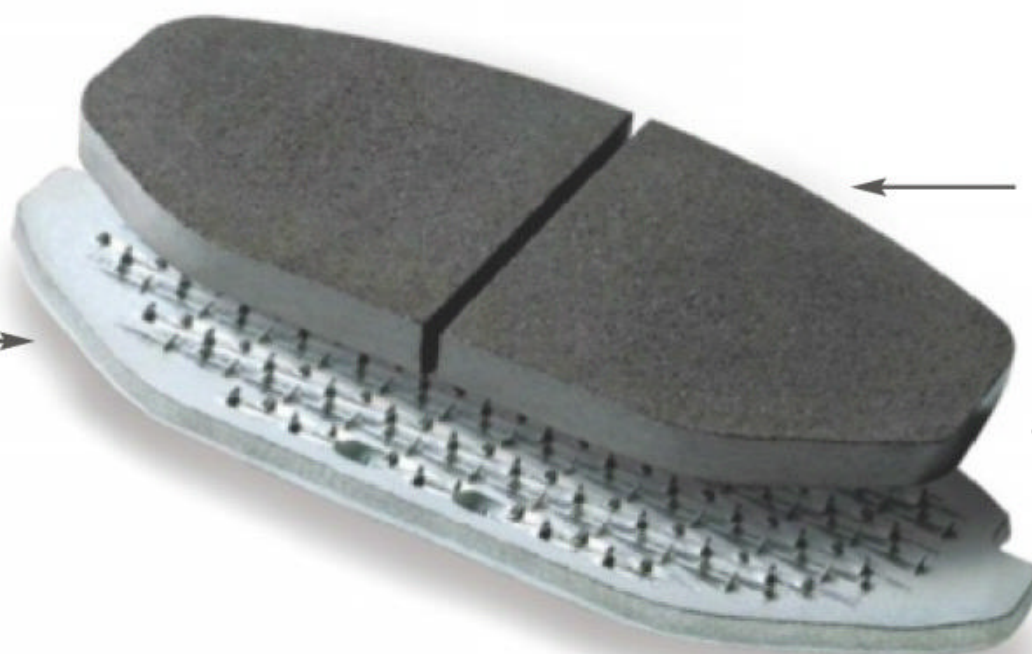
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COVER CAR



The Debut of Liberty

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takes BMW's
peculiar
hybrid
supercar to
strange new
places. If you
weren't a
fan of the i8
before, you
will be now...

The BMW i8 is a bit of an oddball in the realm of the supercar. This is a genre that has traditionally been all about excess; from the Lamborghini Miura that pushed the term into common usage back in 1966 with its juicy V12 motor and spaceship styling, to the common crop of absurd hypercars. The Bugatti Chiron has 16 cylinders and 1,479bhp. The McLaren Senna has the sort of aerodynamic body addenda that could allow it to drive up walls. And the i8? It's got the three-cylinder, 1.5-litre engine from a MINI. Not exactly out to set the world aflame, is it?

Ah, but it is. The whole is far greater than the sum of its parts. You see, whereas the idea of a hybrid car started off with Toyota Prius owners knitting their own yogurt and acting all high-and-mighty about their mpg figures, sports car makers have been using hybrid drivetrains for performance rather than economy. You'll have spotted this with the likes of the Porsche 918 and McLaren P1 – technology that's



COVER CAR

bled down from Formula One, using electric motors to boost petrol engines for high-octane thrills. So the BMW i8 takes this to its logical conclusion: in isolation, the three-cylinder engine doesn't sound that amazing, with its 228bhp. A decent figure for its size, but hardly supercar territory. The electric motor isn't all that thrilling either, offering up 129bhp. But add them together and you get 357bhp, along with the immediate torque that electric propulsion provides; with a kerb weight of 1,500kg-ish and a beautifully engineered chassis, the i8 – in factory-stock form – accelerates from 0-62mph in 4.4-seconds. That's exactly the same figure as the Audi R8 4.2, the Panoz Esperante, the Jaguar XJR-15, the Lamborghini Diablo. See, its book-smarts have helped it grow the muscle to play with the big kids.

The other really impressive thing is the way it looks. The i8 may have launched back in 2014, but it still seems like a prototype for a car pencilled in for 10

years in the future. Seeing these things mixing with the everyday traffic seems bizarre, they just look like nothing else out there.

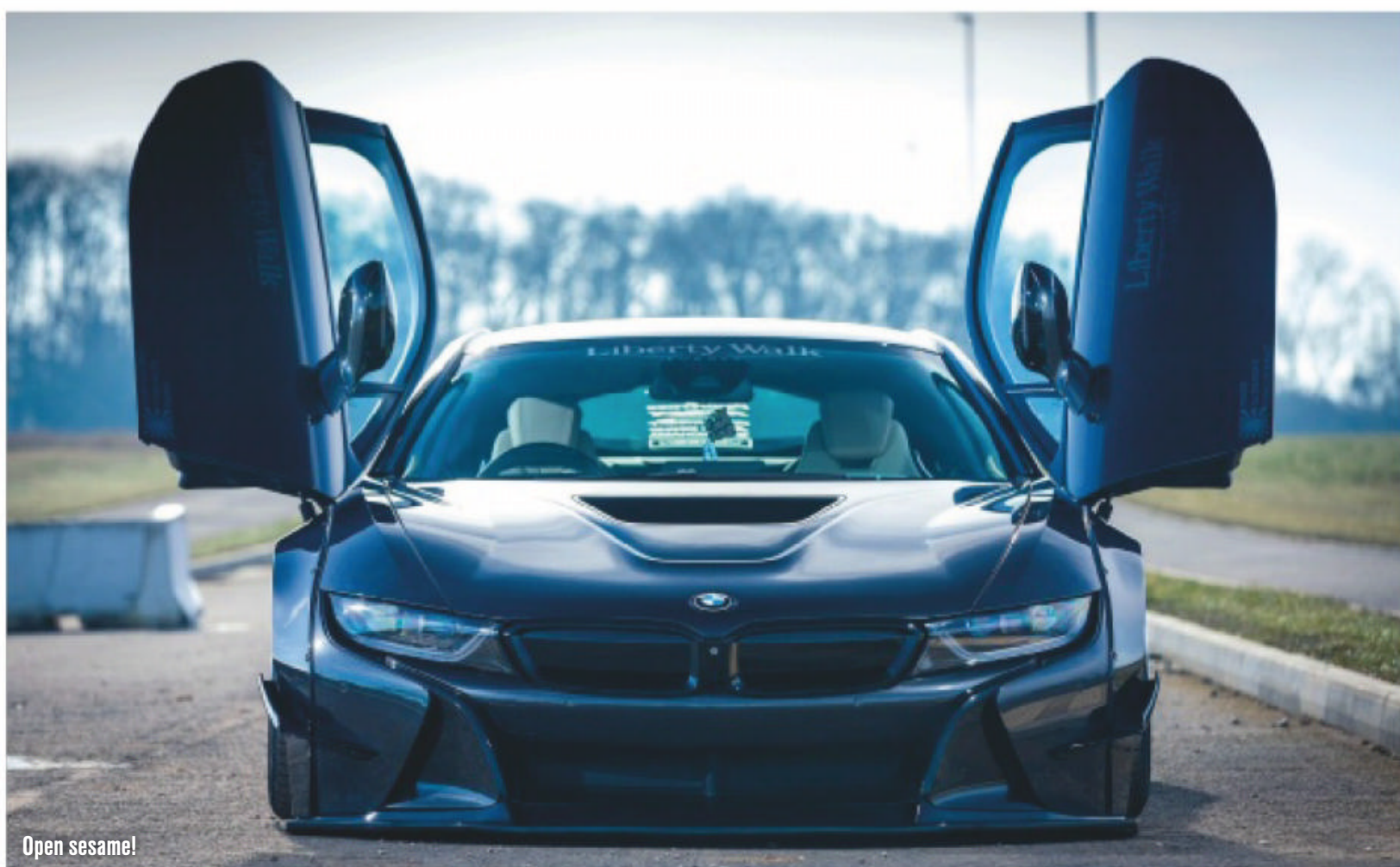
WALKING THE WALK

Now, most people would be satisfied to keep the i8 on the pedestal it deserves to call home, admire it for its quirks and just be satisfied that such a thing exists. Not Liberty Walk. These world-renowned Japanese modifying gods have a finger in every automotive pie. They've been moving into the supercar market and you can be damn sure that just because a car looks like a flying saucer, it's by no means untouchable.

The maestros of cartoon girth are all over the supercar scene, and the advent of Liberty Walk Europe means that us Brits are now able to commission genuine LB Works builds and not have to go through the hassle of having it shipped over in a container. The Performance Company, based in Wellingborough, are the official agents for Liberty Walk and they can take on any commission. So why an i8 this time? Well, why not?

"As soon as we saw the first render of the i8 kit, we knew we wanted to build that car," says James Pearman, Director of The Performance Company. "It's a further step up towards the supercar market, and it's how the i8 really needed to look – so much more aggressive."

"As with most of our cars we buy for projects, we try to find the best example we can," he continues. "This one came direct from a BMW dealer, with the full BMW warranty; it was in good overall condition, although it's not the bodywork or wheel condition we primarily look for, as most of this gets



Open sesame!

OWNER PROFILE:

Name: James Pearman

Occupation: Director, The Performance Company

Any future plans for the car? Until it sells, we'll be taking it to as many shows as possible across the UK and Europe!

OK, let us know your deets so potential buyers can contact you: Sure thing.

They can get us on mail@theperformance.co or 01933 685840.

“It’s a love-it-or-hate-it machine. But it really changes everyone’s perceptions”



Pipercross induction and an F1 exhaust help it run a little over 400bhp



Vossen S17-01 forged three-piece rims

changed. But mileage and history is important for a good donor car.”

With the right donor sourced, the fun could begin. But in this instance, ‘fun’ can be defined as ‘frantic activity to meet a surprisingly tight deadline’, as James and his team were keen to get the car ready for the Essen Motor Show – this would be the first time anyone in Europe had seen the Liberty Walk i8 kit, so The Performance Company wanted to flex their creative muscles and make some waves... but the bodykit was only delivered three weeks before the show! “It was a bit of a rush,” James grins. “And we really have to thank Colourkraft for pulling out all the stops and doing such a fantastic job on the build.”

KRAFT WORK

Many of you will already be familiar with the work of Colourkraft. While the bread-and-butter of this stellar outfit is the traditional bodywork, paintwork and insurance repair jobs, founder David Loraine and his team have always striven for a level of absolute perfection and fastidiousness which has allowed them to branch out into custom work. If you’ve been to



COVER CAR

➔ a car show in the UK recently you'll almost certainly have seen something these guys have put together, like the bagged satin green Liberty Walk Lamborghini Aventador that featured in these very pages last year. It helps greatly that Colourkraft is an official approved supplier and installer of both AirREX air-ride and Liberty Walk body transformations, and as the preferred installer for LB Performance Europe, a lot of builds come directly from the top and they know this stuff inside-out.

This i8's factory colour was Sophisto Grey, a rich metallic graphite, so once the kit was fitted Colourkraft painted it to match, as well as taking all of the factory blue accents (because BMW love to slather their electric cars and hybrids in neon-blue trim to make them look like something out of Tron) and toning them down to a subtle gloss black. All of this has the pleasingly jarring effect of making the car look ostentatious but also quite subtle. A melon-twister of an aesthetic trick, but one it pulls off masterfully.

"At first, we fitted Forgiato wheels, and then installed a full AirREX air-ride system," says James. "In order to up the power a little, we added Pipercross induction and an FI exhaust, before getting it remapped by Motech Performance. It now runs a little over 400bhp.

"Straight after the Essen Motor Show we changed the wheels to these Vossen S17-01 forged three-piece rims, and this changed the entire look of the car. We get a great response to the i8 wherever it goes; in Essen, of course, it was the first time the kit had been



Interior has remained stock



SMART PIPES

This i8's FI Exhaust system is particularly cool. FI stands for Frequency Intelligent and these systems come complete with their own proprietary Valvetronic technology and a built-in intelligent controller; not only do they add power and make an incredible noise, but the remote control allows you to operate the internal valves and switch from Sport to Silent. How cool is that? You can even use a smartphone app to set which levels of rpm, mph or boost you want the valves to open at. So they're not only magnificently engineered and constructed, they're as cunning as a fox with a law degree, too.

Somehow simultaneously both
ostentatious and subtle



COVER CAR

➔ seen in Europe. The car then went to the Performance Car Show at the Birmingham NEC, and again got a great response. The i8 is a love-it-or-hate-it machine, but with its high-tech interior and the way it drives, it really changes everyone's perceptions."

This is undeniably true, and with the beautifully executed modifications to this Sophisto Grey example, it's amped up the supercar credentials of the i8 to a whole other realm: it already had the outrageous looks, but now it's sufficiently crazy to ensure uniqueness in the supercar world – you're not going to see another Liberty Walk i8 as you cruise past Harrods – plus it's got that extra bite to give the performance a steelier edge.

What The Performance Company have achieved here is to take an often-misunderstood supercar and shove its performance credentials right in everyone's faces, using the expertise of Liberty Walk and Colourkraft to turn it into something truly world-class.

The car's for sale too. Although the team are determined to keep having their fun with it until a buyer comes along; there are plenty of shows across the UK and Europe which would welcome this unique creation with open arms. As long as James is holding the keys, the LB i8 will be getting out and about as much as possible. This oddball of a car has certainly found its niche. ■

TECH SPEC: BMW i8

STYLING

Liberty Walk widebody kit; Sophisto Grey; factory blue accents changed to gloss black.

TUNING

B38 1.5-litre three-cylinder turbo plus hybrid synchronous motor; FI Exhaust system; Pipercross induction; remapped by Motech Performance; 400bhp+.

CHASSIS

20in Vossen S17-01 forged 3-piece wheels; AirREX air-ride setup.

THANKS

Thanks to Colourkraft for pulling out all the stops to get it to Essen! And also to AirREX Air Suspension, FI Exhausts, Motech Performance, Pipercross Air Filters, Yokohama Tyres, and Vossen Wheels.

“They’ve taken an often-misunderstood supercar and shoved its credentials in everyone’s faces”





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TOP 10 AWD BARGAINS

Debate has raged for generations over which configuration of driven wheels is preferable in a car. Hot hatch enthusiasts evangelise about how FWD is essential to their car's character. Others feel that the front wheels are doing enough already with all the steering and braking and stuff, and it makes more sense to channel the horses to the tail end (which then, of course, gets a bit lively). There's no right or wrong answer really. You like what you like. But if you want to sidestep this debating quagmire, why not consider the best-of-both-worlds scenario of AWD? With power going to every wheel, you can feel the benefits of both concepts while also having impeccable grip.

All-wheel drive systems have come on a lot in recent years. It's no longer the case that AWD necessarily means agricultural setups with locking diffs and high- and low-range

gearboxes like you get in an old Land Rover. This drivetrain layout has long been associated with performance motoring (look at the Jensen FF of the 1960s, for example), and nowadays there are all kinds of clever four-paw layouts to help deliver your power effectively and get you gripping tenaciously through the curves. Some permanently deliver equal drive to each axle, others are rear-biased and shuffle a bit of power forward when it's needed; in the case of the Ferrari FF, you get two separate gearboxes to make the AWD system work!

There's a world of choice out there but to help you, we've pulled together the top 10 AWD bargains to consider. We haven't set a particular budget here. Instead we've found cars which make us say, 'Ooh, that looks like great value', as opposed to, 'Holy crap, that Range Rover is 90 grand'.

Audi TT 225 Quattro (Mk1)

It's not often that the public gets to buy a concept car. These styling exercises are usually wheeled out to wow the crowds at motor shows, and the model that eventually makes it to production ends up being toned down quite a lot. But with the case of the Mk1 Audi TT, the car that hit the showrooms in 1998 was really quite similar to the 1995 concept, which a lot of people were very happy about. It sold in massive numbers, meaning the market's flooded with them today, and that's great news for people like us who like to Hoover up a performance bargain.

There were quite a lot of spec variants. You could get a FWD setup with the lower-powered engines or the full-fat quattro system with the sportier ones. Engine-wise, you had a choice of either a 1.8T or a 3.2 VR6, although it wasn't quite that simple – the 1.8T could be had with 150bhp, 180bhp, or the brawny 225bhp in the aptly-named TT 225. The 3.2 came with a DSG box and improved aero, although many argue its 247bhp figure isn't enough of a gain over the lighter and more easily tunable 225-spec 1.8T. And it's the 225 we're recommending as the bargain Mk1 TT of choice: as well as the quattro AWD system, you also got the BAM engine, which is basically the 1.8T on steroids: it had uprated pistons and rods, juicier fuelling and bigger intercoolers, and was perfectly matched to that sweet little chassis. And while the drivetrain does make the TT quite heavy for



its size, you wouldn't know it in the corners. These things stick to the road like Velcro, you can essentially take any corner at any speed and never run out of grip. (Disclaimer: do so at your own risk, we don't want any lawsuits if you end up going through a hedge.)

You get all kinds of toys with the 225 too. See if you can find one with the Bose audio option – that's great – and the heated leather seats are lovely. You can pick up a decent 225 for under £4,000 these days. You will see chancers pricing them at £8,000+, but it's really only the rare Quattro Sport that justifies that sort of money. The only thing to bear in mind is that, as these cars are slightly aged now, they might be a bit baggy in terms of bushes, hoses, brakes, suspension. Budget an extra couple of grand to get it tip-top and you'll have one of the most entertaining cars you'll ever own.

PRICE TODAY: £4,000

TOP 3 MODS: Scorpion exhaust, Bilstein B14 coilovers, Revo remap



TOP 10 AWD BARGAINS

Suzuki Jimny

You're going to have to bear with us on this one. We haven't gone mad. We really are suggesting you consider a junior off-roader with 100bhp. But there is a logic to it. You see, the automotive world is seeing a massive shift toward the SUV sector, along with the various crossover, soft-roader, luxury off-roader and rugged mud-plugger variants that go hand-in-hand with it. While we (and, we presume, you) are all dyed-in-the-wool performance car enthusiasts, it's hard to deny the easy practicality of a tall, fat car for load-lugging and family duties and whatnot. Let's face it, a lot of you probably have a sensible daily parked alongside your nuisance project car. So if we're going to have to get involved with this sort of thing, we might as well do it properly.

Now, SUVs and off-roaders tend to command some pretty spicy price tags either because they're luxurious or they just want to give the impression of being so. The cheapest Range Rovers start at £83k, a Volvo XC90 is £52k before options, even the Ford Edge will set you back £37k. But look at the new Suzuki Jimny: these cost £15,499 brand new, and that's a bargain in anyone's books.

OK, it's a bit cheap-and-cheerful – you'd expect it to be, at this price – but it's actually a brilliant little car that drives like a dream on the road and can do genuine off-road rough stuff, and it's the potential that you really need to consider. See, retro is king right now and these cute little soft-roaders look super-old-school. They also come with chunky bolt-on arches, which is what got us thinking about the Jimny in the first place: what if you were to bolt on some even wider arches, throw some nice wide wheels under there, then take out a whole bunch of altitude with a custom air-ride setup? You'd probably be the first in the world to do it, which would make you a modding hero, and you'd get a lot more respect than your neighbour with the XC90 who paid four times as much for a less interesting car.

PRICE TODAY: £15,499

TOP 3 MODS: Liberty Walk kit, wide wheels, air-ride



Volvo V70 R

Fast estates are cool. That's just a fact. And the V70 R is a bit of a stealth weapon too. It may look like a sensible mumwagon, but hiding beneath those boxy lines is a Haldex AWD system and a 2.5-litre turbo 5-pot rocking 296bhp. You can have it with a six-speed manual (or an auto, but that's boring), and performance figures are impressive: 0-62mph is despatched in just 5.9 seconds, with the top speed electronically limited to 155mph. The clever FOUR-C suspension setup was developed by Öhlins, and post-2005 facelift cars got sodding great Brembo brakes too.

These things are ridiculously good value right now. Being a Volvo, you know it's built solid and tough, because they're designed to survive Arctic winters and endless abuse. There's a reason the

police and paramedics use Volvos. They're unburstable. Add in the fact that it's a proper sleeper, and the cherry on the top is that they're pretty tunable too. If you fancy a 400bhp+ grocery-getter, you're just a bigger turbo and a few engine tweaks away.

PRICE TODAY: £5,000

TOP 3 MODS: 3-inch downpipe and race cat, bigger intercooler, IPD anti-roll bars



Subaru Forester STI

There were a number of different Imprezas we thought about putting in this Top 10, but then we decided to stick a Forester in instead. Why? Because it's a cultish, quirky alternative to the more obvious saloon, and their offbeat nature means they're relatively good value. The Forester has always had a sense of fun, as Subaru know what their customers are about and are keenly aware that petrol-engined high-power variants need to share showroom space with the more sensible diesel runabouts. So there have always been factory hot-rod Foresters, the most exciting being the JDM Forester STI, which had an Impreza WRX engine and a chunky bodykit (it helps enormously that the model's based on the Impreza platform, so there's a lot of mechanical interchangeability). The 2.5-litre flat-four gives you 265bhp and it's easy enough to get an extra 70bhp-odd extra just from a remap and a couple of bolt-ons. What's not to like? And it's also worth noting that you can get off-the-shelf air-ride kits for Foresters now too. How good does this modified version look? We rest our case.

PRICE TODAY: £9,000

TOP 3 MODS: Scoobyclinic remap, Hayward and Scott exhaust, AirREX air-ride



Porsche 911 Carrera 4 (996)

The 996-generation Porsche 911 has become a bona fide youngtimer classic. It received a bit of abuse at launch, thanks to the fact it shared its nose with the cheaper Boxster, plus its fried-egg headlights looked a bit weird. The thing that really pissed everyone off was that it was water-cooled – the first 911 generation not to have an air-cooled flat-six, which irritated the pipe-smokers no end. More recently, people got a bit scared of buying used 996s because of the infamous IMS issue, whereby the engine's intermediate main shaft could fail unexpectedly and lurch the engine. But most cars have had this sorted now, and the 996 today looks like a relatively affordable and properly usable sports car.

The best part for cheapskates like us is that, while values of the halo Turbo, GT3, GT2 and RS models are going stratospheric, the Carrera models are surprisingly

cheap. The Carrera 4 has all-wheel-drive, hence why you're seeing it here: it's got clever differential braking, so it's as safe as it is sure-footed, and you get 300bhp from the 3.4-litre flat-six. And it's a usable 911, for about 15 grand. It's a no-brainer, really.

PRICE TODAY: £15,000

TOP 3 MODS: OE Porsche aerokit, GT3 spoiler, DesignTek exhaust



Alfa Romeo Brera 3.2 Q4

The Alfa Romeo Brera is a confusing car. Look at it – it's a hatchback, right? So why does it never figure in round-ups of iconic hot hatches, given the stunning looks and outstanding spec? How come Alfa Romeo just shrug and smirk when people point out the stupid-shaped tailgate and tiny boot means it's really impractical as a hatchback? Aha, that's because it's not actually a hatchback at all. It's a 2+2 coupé that just happens to look a bit hatchbacky.

Still, we can forgive it that, because it looks drop-dead gorgeous, doesn't it? And the top-of-the-range one came with Alfa's intelligent Q4 all-wheel drive chassis, as well as a 260bhp 3.2-litre V6 which just sounds bloody brilliant. The interior's ace too, all rucked leather and recessed dials angled toward the driver. It's a hell of a stylish way to get about, plus it's got the grunt and the grip to entertain you on every journey – and you can have it all for £6k. You need this in your life. Just look at it. We've gone all heart-eyes emoji.

PRICE TODAY: £6,000

TOP 3 MODS: Quaife LSD, KW coilovers, Qtronic Rotrex supercharger



“That’s a lot of performance for the cash. And it probably still has that new car smell”



Audi S1

The S1 was a completely brilliant idea on Audi’s part. The A1 upon which it’s based is a dinky little supermini first launched onto the market in 2010, with compact proportions, a taut little chassis and a really nicely put together interior. In 2014 the S1 version arrived, which packed in frankly far too much power for such a little car; it’s got the Volkswagen group’s EA888 2.0-litre turbo motor, producing 228bhp, along with quattro AWD. This is good for 0-62mph in 5.8 seconds and a top speed that has to be physically restrained at 155mph, which is bonkers in a car like this. Almost unbelievable, in fact.

What’s really appealing about these psychotic tearaways is that they appear to be depreciating like a stone dropped through a wet paper bag. Brand new, one of these cars will cost you over £25,000, but we’re seeing 2014 model-year examples appearing for as little as £12,500. That’s a lot of performance for the cash. And it probably still has that new car smell.

PRICE TODAY: £12,500

TOP 3 MODS: Scorpion exhaust, Revo remap, Wagner Tuning intercooler



TOP 10 AWD BARGAINS

Subaru Legacy 3.0R Spec B

Yep, we've managed to put together a list of 10 AWD cars that features two Subarus and neither one of them is an Impreza! The fact of the matter is that the hot Legacy is actually better value, as well as offering maximum nerd points. The Legacy 3.0R Spec B is a bit of a hidden gem. Most people wouldn't give it a second glance, but to those in the know this is something really special indeed. For one thing, instead of having the traditional Scooby flat-four, it's got a brawny flat-six, which the company saw fit to mate to the peachy gearbox from the Impreza STI. In addition to all this, you get absolutely massive brakes, Bilstein suspension, an LSD, and a 0-62mph figure of 6.6 seconds. Look at the Porsche 996 elsewhere in this list – the Legacy essentially takes the flat-six out of the boot, puts it in the front, then adds a vastly bigger interior. With similar-ish performance, the Spec B is basically a back-to-front 911 with room for a double mattress in the boot. Kind of.

PRICE TODAY: £6,000

TOP 3 MODS: Whiteline ARBs, Powerflow exhaust, Rota wheels



Nissan Skyline GT-R (R33)

On the face of it, spending the thick end of £17,000 on a 1990s coupé doesn't sound like a bargain at all. But Skyline logic isn't the same as regular logic, and the way the market's going at the moment, it's the R33 GT-R that's offering the best kind of affordability. Well, in relative terms, at least. The R32's passed into full-blown modern-classic territory, and you're not going to find a good one for under £25k. (Cheaper ones exist, but you'll end up spending the difference making it good.) The later R34 has been going similarly nuts, with £45k seeming to be the entry point and stretching anywhere up to six figures. But the R33. That's the generation you can still buy for a price beginning with a one.

The R33 GT-R is no poor relation though. It's an incredible machine. It carried over the RB26DETT from the R32, but strengthened and refined, and the chassis was unbelievable. Its combination of Brembo brakes, ATTESA-ETS AWD system and Super-HICAS, and extensive weight-saving throughout the car meant that the R33 was a full 21 seconds quicker around the Nürburgring than the R32. So you're getting more car for less money, see?

PRICE TODAY: £17,000

TOP 3 MODS: Tein coilovers, GReddy oil cooler, JDM Garage shotgun exhaust

Mitsubishi Evo III

The Mitsubishi Evo series held enthusiasts in its thrall for a surprisingly long time, from the launch of the original Lancer Evo (retrospectively nicknamed Evo I) back in 1992 to the Evo X's eventual demise in 2016. These cars represented a revolution in everyday performance, being sensible and practical four-door saloons that were also ballistically fast with incredible handling, and the fact they're so amazingly tunable found them a firm place in the motoring world's hearts.

So, which generation to go for? Well, values of the last-of-the-line Evo X remain strong, and the VII, VIII and IX are all hovering around the £15-24k mark too and the brutal Evo VI's values are soaring thanks to the halo effect of the Tommi Makinen Edition (which has become a particular favourite). But the earlier cars – that's where you find the bargains. Our pick would be the Evo III. This is the one made from early 1995 to late '96 and it was the first properly mental Evo, with the huge boot spoiler that would become the signature look of later models, and 270bhp in stock form. You can pick up a really tidy Evo III for under eight grand. Which sounds like a great idea to us.

PRICE TODAY: £8,000

TOP 3 MODS: AEM Infinity ECU, boost controller, GReddy exhaust



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VAUX POPS

Enthusiasts of all ages know that the Vauxhall Nova is an all-time modding classic. And this smart restomod is the daddy of them all...

Nostalgia, as they say, ain't what it used to be. There's a generation of modifiers today whose knowledge of the Vauxhall Nova begins and ends with scans of old 1990s/2000s tuning mag features shared on back-in-the-day Instagram feeds. But to those of us who grew up modding in the nineties (and shut up – we've still got nearly all our own teeth and hair, thanks), these box-arched little hatchbacks are an essential part of everything we love about cars. Back then, you either had a

Nova or you knew several people who did, they were just everywhere. Boss-man Jules's first car was a Nova GTE with the obligatory Peco exhaust and TSW Stealths; my own first car was a 1.0 Nova base model that was so basic it didn't even have a name. (Novas were renowned for being the car of a billion special editions: Spin, Splash, Fun, Swing, Gem, Ski, Antibes, Cricket, Life, Flair, countless others.) But even with a crummy 45bhp wheezebox, you got those iconic box

arches that were so clearly inspired by the Audi Quattro and Lancia Delta Integrale – and hey, it was a Nova. Novas were just cool. Particularly when the press decided to hold them up as the icon of illegal cruise culture. Then the baby Vaux took on proper villain cred.

SUPER NOVA

For Nathan Powney, it was a drive in a Nova at the age of 15 that made all the



VAUXHALL NOVA



HOT RIDE



C20XE 2.0-litre
DOHC 16v (and
a whole lot of
hidden wiring)

➔ car-buying decisions he'd ever need to make in one fell swoop. "The Nova is the only car I've ever really taken any interest in," he shrugs. "I've loved them since I was about 13, watching local lads modify them in my town.

"For me, current cars really don't float my boat. The era of the Nova and Renault 5 still does it for me. Back when I was 15, I found myself driving a white Mk1 Nova around a field and that was where it all began. When I turned 17 I bought this Nova from my cousin – it was the first car I drove on the road. The modifying started before I passed my test and carried on right through to the present day!"

Now 32, Nathan's owned four other Novas since those fledgling days, but he always kept this one to work on. Safe to say he knows it inside out and then some, having been monkeying around with it for so long, and the number of stylistic and technical evolutions it's passed through is frankly staggering.

"All my cars have been fairly heavily modified, but I found that in 2015 when I felt like the car was finally finished, I

realised I had followed the basic Vauxhall setup – speedlines and coilovers with a fairly plain interior," he ponders. "As I was getting married in May 2018, I decided



in May 2017 to strip the car and start again with an engine conversion, and bring it up to date with a new scene look."

So that's precisely what he did. And it explains a lot. This isn't the work of some scenester who's taken a retro icon and cynically coloured it with the modern brush of fashion-forward paint, air-ride and big tucked rims on skinny tyres. No, this is the product of a lifelong enthusiasm who's gone with the flow as the years pass by.

“This isn't the work of some scenester. This is the product of a lifelong enthusiasm who's gone with the flow as the years have passed by”



£300 RUNAROUND

The car's certainly seen a marked transformation from its humble roots. Originally sold as a Nova Fun special edition (again, these specials weren't always as exclusive as Vauxhall liked to make out), it came from the factory with a 1.2i motor and not a huge amount else. By the time Nathan got hold of it, it was a £300 runabout to which he quickly fitted a full custom bodykit, 15-inch Fox alloys and a 5-inch exhaust. Scoff if you like, but we were all doing it.

"The next era saw the car going in for a full respray – in white again – and this time fitting 16-inch Dare alloys, a smaller exhaust and GMax lowering shocks and springs," he recalls. "This slowly developed into another bodykit, with neon ground lights and a smooth boot.

"The next evolution was to strip it all down to a bare shell, cut out the stock arches and fit the S.I.D. wide-arch kit, which is 30mm wider. I went with this option because I was a fan of running



So evocative of the glory days we didn't realise we missed quite so much



HOT RIDE



THE GENERATION GAME

The genius of this Nova is that it appeals to two distinct generations of modifying enthusiasts at once. For the old guard who grew up around Novas, this car ticks a lot of classic boxes: it's got a C20XE (which is what everyone wanted back then) as well as the period S.I.D. arch kit, Wilwood front brakes (still with the drums at the back, natch), smoothed tailgate and doors with poppers, Cool Louvres bonnet, the fuel filler relocated to the door shut, the Astra digi-dash, and the GSi interior with SR seats. All the desirable touchpoints that would have made a killer Nova for a Saturday night cruise. But this car works equally well for the fans of today's cutting-edge scene trends: air-ride, über-cool grey paint, wrong-manufacturer wheels, smoothed and tucked engine bay, Singer-like interior. This is the Holy Grail – a Nova that everyone likes. (And if you don't... well, you're wrong, sorry.)



Powerflow 3-inch stainless exhaust system



version,” he assures us. “I was bored of the white and wanted a new look, so this Storm Grey was my favourite after seeing a friend’s Fiesta ST200.

“I then wanted to go with large wheels, and found MINI wheels were the perfect fit for PCD and bore size. I kept with the GSi bumpers, but gave them a refresh. With the engine I wanted more power but something not complicated or untidy, so I went with the C20XE setup and rebuilt it myself. Altogether I’ve taken inspiration from other people’s Novas at shows over the years and added my own touch.”

WELL PSSSSHED

Perhaps the most significant element of this quest for uniqueness is the air-ride. This isn’t the first time we’ve seen 18-inch wheels tucked inside Nova arches – and the combination of skinny 165-section tyres and those 30mm-wider arches certainly helps – but the manner in which these weirdly unexpected MINI rims park themselves up there with that immediately recognisable pssh-pssh sound is enough to get every old-school modder running over to see what’s going on.

Nathan’s used TA Technix hardware to get the aired-out Nova sitting pretty, and it’s really given the retro hatchback a 21st-century twist.



larger wheels, but not the look of a full blown wide kit.”

At this stage the car became Lamborghini white, and Nathan sourced a rotten GSi to pillage it for its engine, bumpers and interior, stirring some Porsche D90s and coilovers into the mix.

We’re loving the stroll down memory lane this history provides. It’s like a who’s-who of à la mode modifying trends over the years, and it’s all evocative of the glory days we didn’t realise we missed quite so much. Nathan’s next move was to swap to Speedline Allessio wheels which, again, is a vital part of the fabric of Nova modding

culture. And then... well, life got in the way at this point. With the mortgage and the first child appearing, it was time to be sensible, and the Nova found itself mothballed for a few years.

But life’s too short to be sensible, isn’t it? Whereas most of us would have got shot of the old project as soon as being a grown-up (or at least pretending to) became a priority, Nathan is made of sterner stuff. When the family was settled, he built a garage space and stripped the Nova down to a bare shell once again.

“Every single part has been repainted, upgraded and updated from the last



Full leather/Alcantara black-and-grey retrim with grey diamond stitch





TECH SPEC: 1992 VAUXHALL NOVA

STYLING

1992 Nova Fun 1.2i shell; Ford Storm Grey (ST200) paint; GSi bumpers painted Volvo Grey, GSi boot spoiler; Mk1 Nova tailgate (de-locked and de-wipered); Cool Louvres pressed bonnet; flushed doors with remote poppers; blended-in 30mm-wider S.I.D. wide-arch kit; inner arches all cut and re-welded to allow larger wheels and height drop; Opel wind deflectors; fuel filler relocated into door shut; fully smoothed engine bay and slam panel; GSi window trim; red tinted rear lights; new sills and front valance.

TUNING

C20XE 2.0-litre DOHC 16v; stock internals with uprated INA followers; Irmscher Power Cap; beige cam cover and belt cover; gloss black head, block and gearbox; modified 120a alternator; lightweight pulley wheel; ARP rod bolts, custom-machined Vauxhall oil cap; 6in chrome air filter; Mocal short oil filter; heat-wrapped Cavalier manifold; Powerflow 3in stainless exhaust system; stainless bolts and chrome cover caps throughout; smoothed plug cover; full Roose Motorsport hose kit; stainless Kelsport heat shield; stainless water bar; stainless reservoir cover and flocked cap; GSi radiator and fan setup; stainless Bailey header tank with flocked cap; fully hidden wiring throughout engine bay (engine wiring tucked inside stainless tubes welded from lights to battery tray running through inner wings); F20 5-speed gearbox with short-shift linkage; LMF conversion hubs; 2.0 conversion shafts with 2.0 CVs all round; LUK clutch.

CHASSIS

7x18in MINI John Cooper Works R109 wheels (painted Volvo Grey to match bumpers) with polished hardware; 165/35 Nankang AS-1 tyres; 25mm (front) and 20mm (rear) Direnza adaptors; TA Technix air-ride suspension (air tank installed on floating bracket in boot with hardlines piped to manifold); shocks painted beige to match engine cover and brakes; Powerflex bushes throughout; rear anti-roll bar; strengthened front arms; Wilwood 4-pot Midilite callipers; Polymatrix Q pads; 284mm vented discs; carbon sleeved HEL braided hoses; new brake lines throughout; GSi brake servo; GSi drums and new shoes on rear; full chassis strengthening kit.

INTERIOR

Full leather/Alcantara black-and-grey retrim on SR seats and doorcards with grey diamond stitch; custom rear cards to allow fuel filler pipe; front handles removed; leather handbrake cover to match seats; GSi black centre console; speakers hidden inside doors and dash; GSi black dash and full GSi interior trim; black perforated leather headliner and sun visors; control knobs painted beige; black painted pillar trims; blacked-out parcel shelf; Mk1 dark grey carpets, Richbrook black mats with black leather trim; acoustic dark grey covered trim on boot install; Nova-branded Momo steering wheel; Corsa B stalks; Sparco gearknob painted beige; electric window conversion; Astra digi-dash conversion; custom iPad display mount; Dynamat sound deadening throughout.

THANKS

Thanks to my family, friends and wife, who have all lent a hand when I've needed some advice and allowed me the time to spend building the car the way I wanted it. Being able to build the car from scratch myself has given me the best possible enjoyment from modifying any car.

➔ The fusion of old and new can be found throughout the car. Shaved engine bays with hidden wiring weren't really a thing back in the nineties, and Nathan's precision work here works perfectly with the classic choice of C20XE motor; moving inside the car we find SR seats and a GSi dash and console, just like the old days, but it's all trimmed with a sumptuous contemporary finish.

What this fella's created is the sort of Nova we could never have dreamed of back at the turn of the century – it's radically reworked, but not in the manner of fitting outrageous Kingdom bodykits or skinny 19-inch wheels or frenched lights. No, every single element of this car has been carefully considered, and the knowledge that flows through it stretches back across the decades. The best Nova in the country right now? We wouldn't bet against it. ■

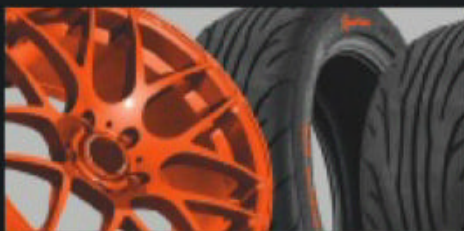




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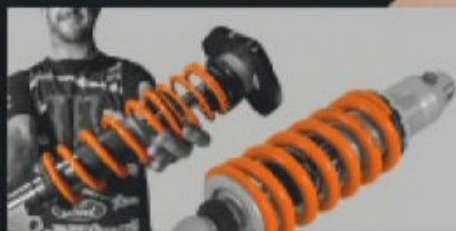
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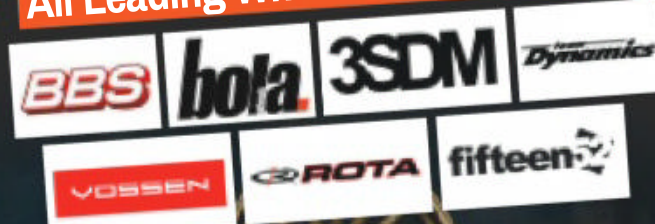
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FRESH KIT

JL AUDIO RD1500/1 MONOBLOCK, £650

Sure, it may be a little unusual to kick off the Fresh Kit section with an audio product, but that goes some way to explain just how special this full-on slab of electronic wizardry really is.

Now we all know US firm JL Audio is best known for their super-high-end SQ applications. But what they've done here is managed to cram all their usual sound processing knowhow into a hardcore Class D amp, which is not only fully optimised for subwoofers, but it kicks out the sort of power that makes a Scud missile look a little on the subtle side.

What we're looking at here, is 15000 watts RMS of sheer grunt, the most powerful amplifier JL Audio have ever produced. And it comes with an extra-special low impedance protection circuit that achieves 1ohm stability and full output at both 1 and 2ohms. It's another world first for JL.

But don't go thinking this thing is all big spuds and no brains. Yes, it may be like a sledgehammer, but it's a sledgehammer with laser-guided precision. In fact, there's loads of clever stuff to talk about with this one, so get strapped in!

First up, there's the dual-range differential-balanced inputs. These can accept speaker-level signals (of up to 8 volts) from both factory and aftermarket systems, without the need for a specialist LOC (line output convertor). This means you can simply splice your speaker wires to RCA ends and away you go. That's pretty mental on its own, but these are also put together outstanding noise

rejection characteristics to prevent unwanted interference along the way.

Then there's the complete signal processing package, which includes such highlights as a low pass filter that has continuously variable signal selection, and a variable bass boost EQ.

Efficiency, and lots of it, is taken care of by JL's patented NextD switching technology to offer

reduced current draw and reliable power output in what is a relatively small package. And there's a whole load of other stuff we can't quite bend our minds around too.

Perhaps the flashiest bit of tech of the lot though, is the innovative onboard LED clipping indicator, which has been designed so just about anyone can set the input sensitivity effectively without risking damage to their woofer.

In the most scientific of terms then, this one is the absolute bollocks!

www.jlaudio.co.uk



FAST FACTS

- 1500 watts RMS @ 1 or 2ohms
- NextD Switching Technology
- LED clipping indicator and status bar
- 12dB/octave low-pass filter
- Variable frequency selection 50-500hz
- Signal-sensing on/off
- Dual-range differential balance inputs
- Pass-through pre-amp outputs
- Dim: 458x177x54mm

FRESH KIT

NEW PRODUCTS

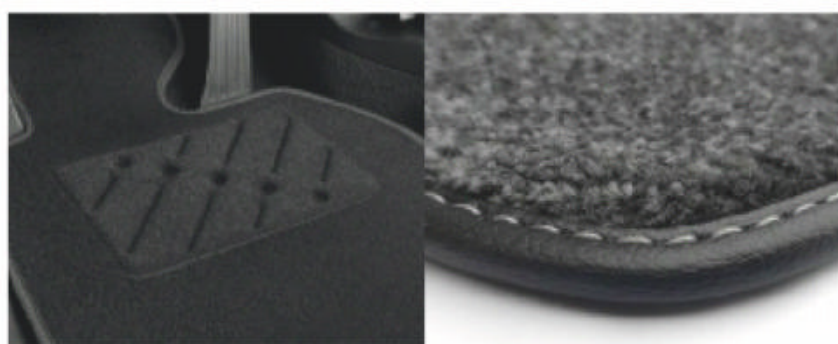
The shiniest and freshest mods on the market

NEXT DAY CAR MATS, FROM £22

Here's a great idea, and one that does exactly what it says on the tin. After all, why should you have to wait more than a few hours for your posh luxury mats? Your kicks and your carpet will be all dirty by next week, right?

Well, these guys have a huge selection of reasonably priced, fully tailored mats available in all sorts of colours and materials. And the best thing is that, as long as you order 'em by two in the afternoon, you'll be whacking them in your motor by the next morning. You can't argue with that level of service, can you?

www.nextdaycarmats.com



- **Size:** 8x18 inch
- **PCDs:** Any 5x108-5x120
- **Offset:** ET42
- **Finishes:** Gloss black, gloss black/polished, gunmetal/polished

WOLFRACE AD5, FROM £128 (EACH)

If you like your rim designs a little on the chunk-tastic side, these new AD5s from British wheel firm, Wolfrace, could be right up your proverbial ally. Coming in at 8x18-inches, these slab-faced, 5-spoke monsters are not only available in three sweet finishes, but they can also be custom-machined to any PCD from 5x108 to 5x120, covering the majority of larger hatches and saloons on the market.

There's also a separate matching version custom-made for the Ford transit, if you fancy a bit of that too. Between all that and the price, there's certainly a lot to love here!

www.wolfrace.com

Bargain toolage! Because the show season is coming fast...

Sealey 20V Combo Kit, from £376

Sealey seem to have the answer to all our manly DIY woes here with this awesome five-tool combo pack. It includes a professional tool for just about every job out there, and they all run on the same thoroughly hardcore Li-ion 20V battery, saving you a few quid along the way. The comprehensive cordless kit features, two 3Ah batteries, a drill/driver, 230NM impact wrench, an orbital sander, grinder and what can only be described as a proper weapon of a reciprocating saw, all packed away in an equally hardcore ABS storage case. Bonza.

www.sealey.co.uk



Hawk Tools Upright Compressor, £120

If you're serious about your spec'd-up garage kit, then you'll be needing a compressor – them is the rules! Still, if you're worried about paying a fortune, or just a lack of room, then this upright unit could be the one to take your mechanical prowess to the next level.

Featuring a high performance 2hp motor, a 50-litre tank and up to 8-bar of working pressure, this configuration is not only ideal for space-saving, but it'll have plenty of grunt for running air tools, tyre inflators and paint spraying, too. An ideal bit of pro kit designed with home use in mind.

www.hawktools.co.uk



MEGUIAR'S 3-IN-1 WAX, £25

What's better than a wax? A wax that's also a cleaner and a polish, too, of course. And that's exactly what the bods at Meguiar's are offering here with their imaginatively named 3-in-1 Wax.

Still, they may have not spent an age messing about on what to call it, but there's no denying they've put some serious R&D into this one. Packed with advanced abrasives and a whole load of rich polishing oils, this thoroughly 21st century formula can remove defects and blemishes below the surface of your paint, but provide additional depth, fullness-of-colour and gloss too. What's more, the unique blend of carnauba and synthetic polymers provide a super-durable barrier to the elements and extreme water-beading, all in one simple step.

It can also be applied by hand or with a DA and for 25 quid you get a big 16-ounce (yep, they're American) bottle of the stuff. We likey. Lots.

www.meguiars.co.uk

**YOKOHAMA ADO8RS TYRES, FROM POA**

Very few things can be described as properly legendary in the modified car world (Jules' appetite springs to mind – Midge), but Yokohama Advan ADO8 rubber is definitely one of 'em. Still, all good things have to come to an end. Or do they? It appears not, because the Japanese daddies of all things black and sticky have just launched the Advan Neova ADO8RS tyre, specifically for the European market.

Available in a range of 15-19-inch sizes, these offer the same hardcore (not to mention rather attractive) tread pattern as their new ADO8R cousins, along with their enhanced control and wet/dry grip, but they use an all-new, fine-tuned compound, designed to lower rolling resistance to achieve lower fuel consumption and say "kuso kurae" to EU regulations.

In other words, they look the part and they do the business. Nice one!

www.yokohama.co.uk

**Clarke 12V Impact Gun, £42**

Who doesn't need a proper impact wrench in their life? Whether it's garage antics, track day, or just changing hoops on the move, that crusty old wheel brace is soooo 2018, right? Luckily though, you don't have to bust out the credit card on one of those expensive, pro cordless jobs, because this portable half-inch drive puppy will do everything you want for a little over 40 quid.

Rated at 350NM, which should be plenty for most stubborn bolts or wheel nuts, it also includes 17, 19, 21 and 23mm impact sockets and, as something of a bonus, proper battery clips for when you don't want to unplug your phone from the fag-lighter.

www.machinemart.co.uk

**Awesome Audio****KICKER COMPC 10-INCH LOADED ENCLOSURES, £160**

When it comes to the science of engineering hernia-inducing, hardcore bass, there's not many that can even begin to keep up with the lords of the lows over at Kicker. That said, they may be arguably most famous for their monster square subs, which are clearly forged in the fires of hell itself. But nowadays they're all about producing some of the most powerful, compact enclosures on the market too.

These new CompC units are a case in point. They may only be packing a punchy 10-incher, but what a woofer these award-winning CompC units really are. And that goes double for when they're matched to an immaculately engineered, thin-profile ported box that's optimised specifically for each sub.

The results, as you may expect, are nothing short of profound. These enclosures can eat up to 300 watts RMS and pump out some serious volume. But they do it with fidelity and sound quality that's simply unbeatable.

You also get a choice of 4 or 2ohm woofers, which should cater for any audiophile-pleasing setup, even when space is super-tight. Sonic awesomeness and no mistake!

www.kickeruk.com

TOP FEATURES

- Peak Power: 600W
- RMS Power: 300W
- Dims: 19.4cm x 38.1cm x 54.6cm
- 2 or 4ohm



LIFESTYLE

The car culture experience doesn't just belong in the garage

Liberty Walk Spring Collection, From £10

Winter is officially over and spring is in full swing, which means only one thing. It's time for a new wardrobe, and we're not talking about a PAX one from IKEA! Nope, we're talking about this awesome new clobber from our favourite Japanese aero specialists. They have new designs dropping all the time but we're particularly fond of the new Works Nation hoodie that's at the top end of the price spectrum and the Lanyards that are the bottom. They'll come in particularly handy at a plethora of shows during the 2019 season.

www.libertywalk-eu.com

Works Nation
Hoodie, **£60**

Liberty Walk
Snapback, **£30**

Liberty Walk
Lanyard, **£10**



Liberty Walk 1:18 Model Cars, £200

For us modifiers, a Liberty Walked supercar is at the very summit of our dream garage, but unfortunately for the majority of us they'll always be a fantasy (a bit like the one we have about Margot Robbie). But that's about to change. You can now buy a pre-modified Huracán and Aventador direct from Liberty Walk Europe for just £200! Now, they might be 1:18th of the size of a real one, but who's going to get caught up in pedantic

little details like that when you can legitimately tell people you have a LB Huracán at home!

They are available in matt black, white and red, the doors open and they boast a detailed interior. Also, the boxes have all been signed by the main man himself, Wataru Kato from Liberty Walk. If only they could make a model of Margot Robbie to go with it...

www.libertywalk-eu.com

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Midge puts his feet up and tries to pass it off as work...

When it comes to choosing products, detailing is an extremely subjective thing.

We all have our favourite gear we like to use, from a wealth of different waxes, polishes, dressings and cleaners. What unites us all in the car care world though, is one single constant: the humble microfibre cloth.

If you're anything like us, you'll get through a fair few over the course of the year. Drying, polishing, buffing... they get used for everything and you can never have enough. Good ones aren't what you'd call cheap though.

And that's why, unless you're absolutely loaded, you won't be throwing yours away after every use. After all, you wouldn't do that with your socks would you? No, you'll be wanting to get 'em washed, keeping them in tip-top condition.

But how do you remove all the residues and grime that comes from intensive car cleaning, without resorting to nicking your mum's Ariel Ultra? And what's the best stuff to rejuvenate the fibres, to keep your essential detailing companions effective for longer? Well, Auto Finesse may have the answer...



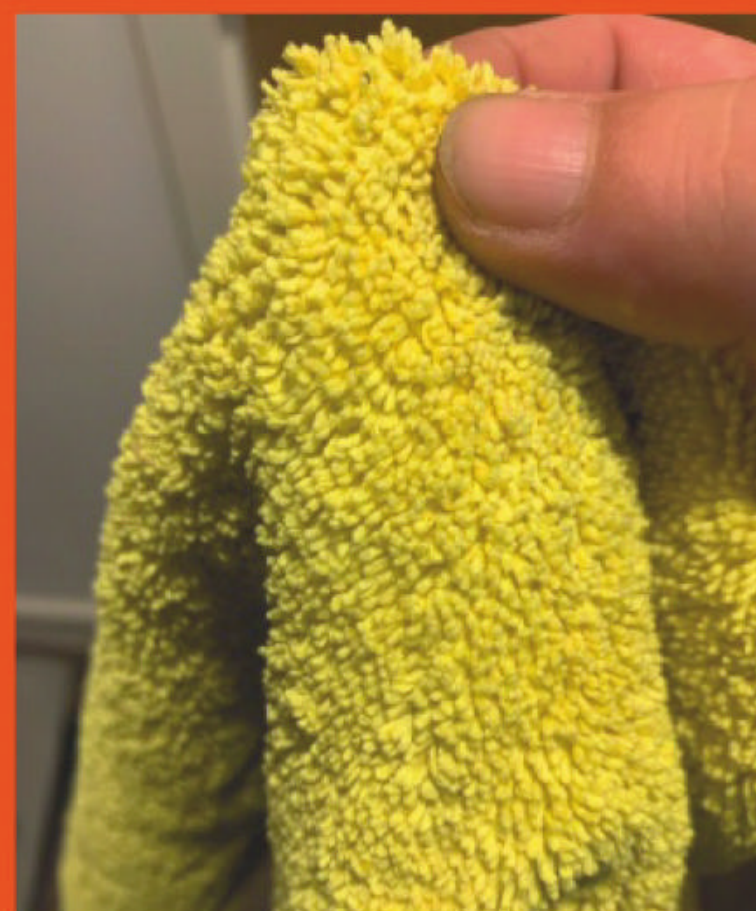
THE PRODUCT

OK, so admittedly it's not the most labour-intensive product test I've ever carried out. Although I did have to commandeer the washing machine off the missus (ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the 1950s – Jules). But, there's actually more to cleaning your microfibre properly than you might think.

For a start you can't use regular washing powders. These contain all sorts of abrasives that inevitably get trapped in the fibres, and you don't want to be rubbing these all over your paintwork. The same can be said for fabric softeners. These tend to dwell deep down in the cloth, vastly reducing the effectiveness of the fibres. Calgon? Well that's out too. Your washing machine might live longer, but it's not specifically designed for your cloths. And heat is an issue too, the reason why you should never hot wash or tumble dry. Microfibres contain a lot of polyester and other plastics which can melt and then harden as they cool, effectively like bunging in a load of grit. Not so much of a problem if you're just dusting the telly or cleaning the windows at home, but again, you don't want to be using them on your freshly polished paintwork.

But I digress. This is supposed to be the FC product test. So, what about Micro Wash? Well no one can call this specially formulated microfibre cleaner anything but easy to use. You just pop 50ml in the detergent tray, slap on a 30°C cycle and put your feet up.

You can use this product for hand washing too of course. But as I'm not a regular on TOWIE, and these ain't no Vivienne Westwood underpants, I'll (rather lazily) stick to the faithful Bosch thanks!



THE VERDICT

It's an unusual product – you don't see a lot of these about. And that seems silly, because a dedicated microfibre cloth wash just makes so much sense. Auto Finesse have spotted a gap in the market here. And at the risk of going all Daz Doorstep Challenge on you, Micro Wash really does work well. It says on the bottle that it easily removes waxes and polish residues, and that's exactly what it does. It may not be the most exciting concept ever, but it's effective and it will save you money.

There is also the added bonus that it's specially formulated to physically rejuvenate the fibres, restoring plushness and making your clothes (you mean cloths – Initial G) like new. Come to think of it, they smell bloody good too – Linda Lusardi herself would be proud! Or am I just showing my age there?

Anyway, Micro Wash does everything that's expected and shows more than decent value, with about 10 full loads to a single bottle. So, unless you're a professional valet, you won't be running out any time soon.

A top little product this. Very impressive for a tenner. I wonder if it'll work on my underclangers (neat bleach wouldn't touch those skids, mate! – Jules)?

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DIY DAY JOBS & WEEKEND WONDERS

COILOVERS

Get down and dirty this afternoon...

Words: Midge Photos: Jules

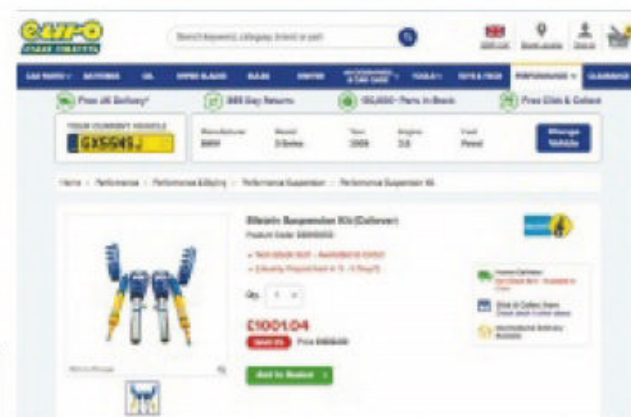


We all know coilovers are numero uno in the modified car world. Apart from wheels (which, let's face it, every car has to have), suspension is perhaps the most common mod out there, with coilovers being by far the most utilised on the streets.

What's even better though, is that fitting them is a relatively simple mechanical job you can do

yourself at home.

It can be a mucky job. Especially if you have a car that, like our Jules's E91 Beemer here, appears to have recently competed in the World Rally Championship. But don't let a little bit of mud put you off. It's something you can get sorted this weekend. And here's how...



THE GEAR

Fitting Time: Give yourself at least a good hour or so for each corner.

Costs:from £400

You'll already know coilovers range in price and, as always, we'd recommend going for the very best you can afford. They're not all equal you see. Cheaper ones may not have the adjustable damping or height adjustment you're looking for, and full-race items may be a little too harsh for the road. That said, they're all better than standard springs, right?

Euro Car Parts sell a selection of coilover kits for most cars to suit a range of budgets. But we opted for these BC Racing BR Series units as they offer the perfect mix of track-ready performance and compliance for fast road driving. Perfect for what we needed.

Specialist Tools:

Apart from the usual tools (stuff like spanners, socket sets, jacks and the like), you'll usually need a set of coil spring compressors and a torque wrench for this job. These can be found at your handy neighbourhood Euro Car Parts, with prices starting from as little as 20 quid.

www.eurocarparts.co.uk

DO IT!

1 JACK IT UP

First things first. You'll need to get the car off the floor and secured. We may be using a two-post lift here (chiefly because I'm old and my knees hurt), but it's a job easily carried out on your drive, something we've done at FC a million times before. The point is that all the health and safety rules apply here. Use a proper trolley jack, have the car on level ground and always make sure your motor is solid and secure on axle stands before you start pulling bits off. Goggles and gloves are also a good idea. Wear a suit of armour if you like – you know the score, use your noodle! Right, now we've got any 'Midge vs some plum with no common sense' lawsuits out of the way, get it up, pull those wheels off and douse all the bolts in WD40.



2 PREPARING THE STRUTS

You can start on either end – personally I like to go with upfront because these can be the most complicated. It's also handy that, if you run out of time when finishing both front coilovers, you can still drive the car on the standard rears without any reverse-rake situations.

The first thing to do then, is remove any brake hoses and ABS sensors that may be attached to the OE shock. Usually these will be bolted or clipped on. So whip 'em off and push 'em out of the way.

Modern cars will often have an ARB drop link connected to the strut or lower arm. You'll usually need to remove this too (in our case the same bolt holds the brake hose/ABS bracket). Many coilovers require shorter or adjustable ARB links and the best kits will have these included.



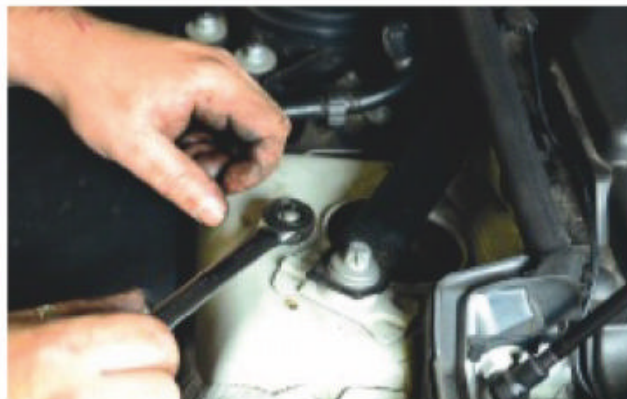
Drop links will often be the hardest component to remove and there are two main reasons for this. First, the ARB will be applying pressure from the link on the other side. And second, these often have ball joints that will spin when you try and take the nuts off (requiring a whole load of pressure on the back, or a spanner and torx/Allen key combo). A little bit of research can go a long way here.

Some mechanics prefer to remove the link on each side first, and then fit them both last (when all the coilovers are on), taking the ARB out of the equation until the end.



3 REMOVING THE STRUTS

Here's where different models vary. Your front struts will always be mounted at the top and the bottom, but this could be in a number of different ways. There's no hard and fast rule here, but it's common on Japanese cars for the shock to be mounted directly to the back of hub with one or two bolts. This tends to make them easy



to remove; you simply pull the bolts and let the hub flop forwards. Bear in mind that some cars (Scoobys spring to mind) have special camber bolts. So you'll want to mark these up to make sure they're orientated in the same way when they go back in.

In our case, as with many European cars, the

bottom of the shock slides into a flange and is secured with a pinch bolt. You need to support the bottom of the hub with a jack and remove this bolt (making a note of which direction it goes in). Then you can carefully lower the hub. If you're lucky the strut will slide all the way out as the hub moves down (it may need a little persuasion with a lump hammer). But in many cases the standard strut will simply be too long to pull out easily. With this in mind, you may need to get your spring compressors in there to essentially make the strut shorter.

When it comes to the top bolts, these will (usually) be under the bonnet. Many cars have two or three small nuts to remove, although it's worth noting that some (VAG cars, Fords and plenty of others) have the strut secured with a single bolt and plate in the middle. Support the strut underneath, undo the top bolt (or bolts) and slide the whole strut out from under the arch.



4 TOP MOUNTS

Our BC Racing coilovers come with camber-adjustable top mounts, but many kits will need to have the standard top mounts installed before they can be fitted. When this is the case, you'll need to have the spring compressed to unbolt the standard items. The key thing here is to be safe. It's likely to be the most dangerous part of the job. Standard coils are held under heavy compression by the top mounts, so never, ever attempt to take them off without using proper spring compressors. Otherwise, they will fire off when released, and you will get hurt. There are many, many horror stories. This is also a job a professional garage will be able to do for you in a matter of minutes, so it's something worth weighing up. Make a note of

the order the top mount components (washers, spacers, bearings bushes and so on) are removed in, so they can go back on the new strut in the same order. Once your new coilovers have their top mounts bolted on, they're ready to go on the car.

5 FITTING

Installation is usually the easy bit and you'll find your own order in which you'll like to do things. Some prefer to bolt on the top mount first and then use a jack to bring up the hub to the coilovers. Others prefer to bolt on the bottom and bring the whole assembly up to the top. It doesn't matter – whatever works!

There are a few things to be aware of though. First, make sure it's the right strut you're putting in. Most of these are specific to the side of the car and it's annoying having to take it all apart again. Yep, I've done that more than once!

Also, it sometimes helps to adjust the coilovers to make them as short as possible, just to give you more room to work. When you start bolting everything back in place, be careful to use the torque settings for each bolt and use a little copper grease. Don't go batshit with an impact gun or start hanging off your spanner. Yes, they need to be tight, but you don't want to break stuff off. Especially if you haven't got another car for going to the main dealer for new bolts in!





6 ADJUSTING

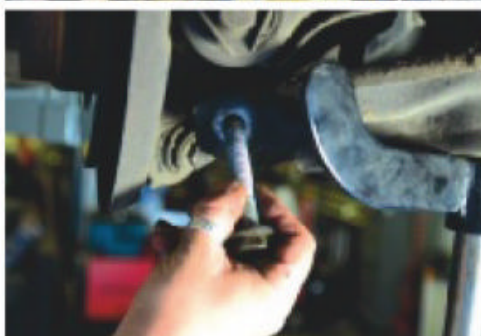
Once your new strut is in place, and you've bolted on the ARB links, brake hoses and ABS sensors, you can adjust the spring platforms using the C-spanners included with your coilovers. Everyone loves a slammed car of course. But we'd always err on the side of caution at first. The higher up the spring platform (and the more pressure you put on the spring), the higher your ride-height will be. Don't bosh it into the weeds right away. To avoid potential damage, take your time, lower it down slowly on your wheels and check nothing rubs. Remember, you can always go back and lower it some more. That's the best thing about having coilovers!

7 UP THE REAR

Now for the back of the car. And once again, there are various suspension configurations which could be mounted in various different ways. First there's the actual physical makeup of the shock. Some cars (commonly the Jap stuff), use a 'coil-over-spring' strut, much like you've just fitted on the front. These could be bolted into the lower control arms or rear subframe on the bottom and secured at the top, either inside the car, or under the arch. With this type of suspension, you'll usually need your spring compressors to remove the original top mounts

if these need to be reused.

The BMW (joyfully) goes for the most difficult approach. The tops of the shocks are mounted inside the car, meaning a whole load of rear trim has to come out just to get to 'em. Like many cars out there, it also employs separate shocks and springs, rather than a coil-over-spring setup. The key thing to remember is that the springs do the lowering and the shocks do the damping. With this particular configuration, what makes them height-adjustable is the special spring platforms that can be wound up or down.



8 FITTING

Generally speaking, rear suspension is straight-forward to install. Usually it will require unbolting the bottom of the shock (while supporting the lower control arm or subframe) and then carefully lowering the lot down to release it (in this case, along with the spring). You will then be able to unbolt the top of the shock, ready to pop in the new one. Usually you'll be able to wiggle out the springs too. Although now and again you will need compressors to make them shorter.

The only real difference when installing your new suspension is that you will have to fit the adjustable spring platform to the standard spring cups first. Not a problem: these will usually bolt straight on. Apart from that, fitting is the reverse of the removal.

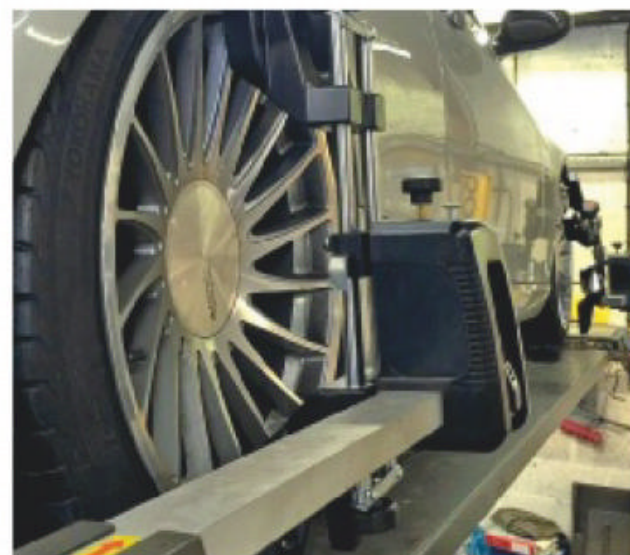
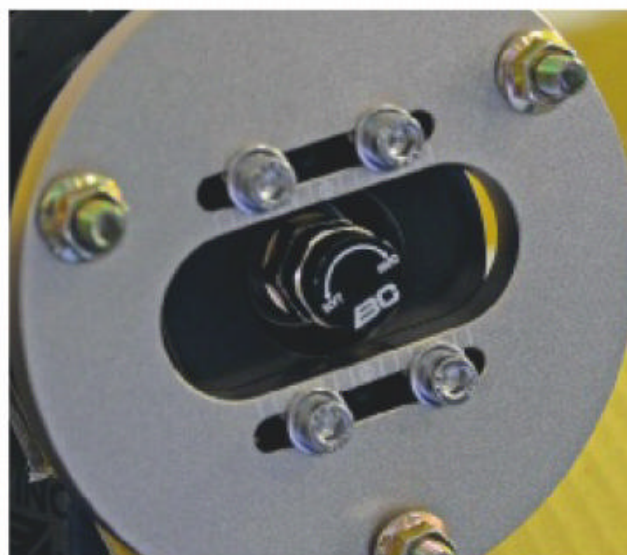
Supporting everything with a jack is possibly the most important thing here (or a transmission stand if you're using a ramp). This is to stop everything dropping down unexpectedly. Don't forget there may be brake hoses or ABS sensor cables and fuel lines attached to a rear subframe. It goes without saying that you don't want to damage these.

Once again, on some cars like this Beemer, you may have camber bolts that will need to be marked up. Oh yeah, and don't forget those torque settings.

9 ADJUSTMENT

So, you're all fitted up and the ride-height looks good. The final part is the damping adjustment. Many coilovers come with this feature via a knob on top or on the side of the damper, and it basically allows you to tweak how hard or soft the suspension is. It's something which can only really be done after a test drive, then set to your preference. Personally, I like to set it about half way, test, then adjust from there.

The last thing to do is to take your car for an alignment check. Every time you change your suspension you'll be messing with the geometry, so having the tracking sorted straight away always comes highly recommended.



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Photography: Daniel Pullen Car: BMW i8 Owner: Liberty Walk Europe



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Photography: Mike Kuhn Car: Lamborghini Gallardo Z Owner: Murad Alzuraiki

Words: Daniel Bevis Photography: Conek Foto

CORRADO SOPRANO

The VR6 Corrado was always a psychotic little thing. But when you swap in a new-wave six-shooter, it morphs into an old-school gangster...

This is, by any measure, a lot of engine to shove into a Corrado. Just look at it. Yes, we know VW bolted a VR6 into the plush Golf-based coupé way back in 1992, but it was never anything like this. This is a whole other level.

Perhaps we'd better rewind a little. Start from the beginning. Then you'll see why we're having such difficulty stopping ourselves from tripping over our irretrievably dropped jaws. See, the Corrado has been setting hearts aflame since it emerged from its Golf-shaped chrysalis back in 1988. At launch, this pretty little thing did its level best to upset the sports car applecart by being belligerently chunky, starkly defying the sylph-like styling of the era, the G60 rocking a supercharger where other manufacturers were dabbling with turbos.

You got a lot of kit for your outlay too – a devil-may-care attitude to option box-ticking would see you primped to the nines with air-con, electric windows, heated electric mirrors, leather steering wheel, cruise control, trip computer, posh stereo, ABS, sunroof, leather seats, heated washer nozzles... You name it. VW's luxury sports car offered it.

The engines, however, didn't light everybody's pants on fire. Sure, the 136bhp 1.8-litre 16v motor has a lot of fans nowadays, and the supercharged 160bhp G60 was a bit of a fireball in relative terms. But it was a frankly excellent management strategy decision in 1992 that elevated the Corrado to the big leagues: the arrival of the VR6 engine. Offered as a full-fat 2.9-litre variant (distinct from the Golf's, with its 2.8-litre displacement), it served up a meaty 190bhp along with that trademark six-pot thrum.

Now, the Corrado you see here wasn't intended to enjoy the VR6 motor. It came out of the factory as a G60 and what its Polish owner RADO has done is to fundamentally change its very nature. The two cars were quite different from the factory: the G60 had Bilsteins while the VR6 had

Konis, and the fatter motor meant that the VR6 needed a bonnet bulge, a wider track, a broader front bumper leading to wider wings, and so on and so forth. But what Piotr did was to take a step back, analyse the nature of his G60 along with VW's perspective on how the VR6 should operate, and essentially throw all perceived logic out of the window. 'I can do better than that,' was the thinking.

And you know what? He was right.

"I bought the car back in December 2011," he explains. "My previous car was a B7 Audi A4, which I liked a lot, but I wanted to have something older, something a bit more retro. I'd always loved the shape of the Corrado, so that's what I decided to get. And when I bought it, it was a totally stock G60."





UNPOPULAR CHOICE

The car was, in fact, one of the very last remaining G60 Corrados in Poland, a model that was never a massive seller there in period and whose numbers have markedly dwindled over the years, either through expensive repairs and maintenance no longer making them economically viable, or simply through people pillaging them for their engines to put into Golfs.

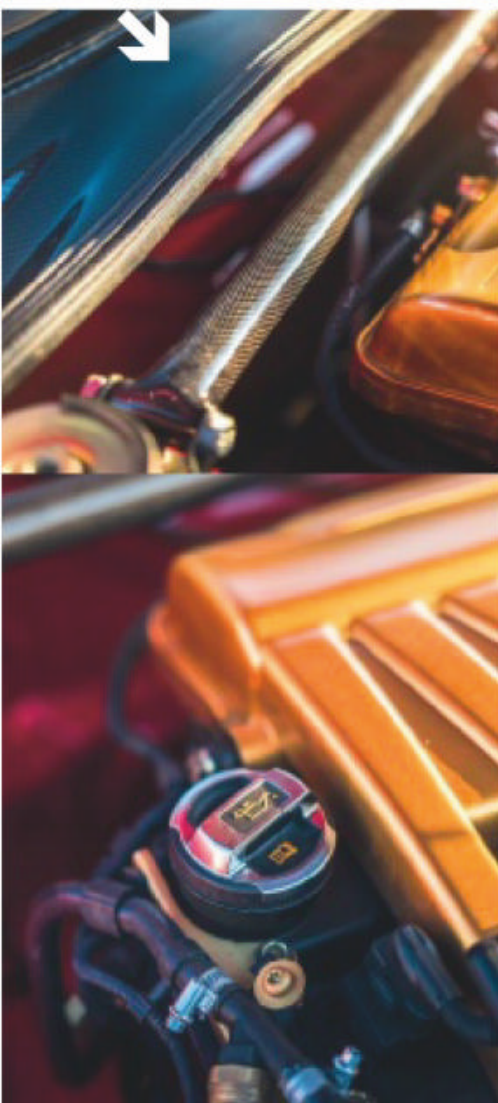
It's for this reason that a lot of Piotr's domestic peers are a bit annoyed by what he's done to this Corrado – but you shouldn't build a car to keep other people sweet, should you? Your ride, your way. Besides, he had logic on his side. While the car had been advertised as being in

good overall condition, that proved not to be entirely the case, and as well as various woes caused by failing brakes and electrical gremlins, the G-Lader supercharger blew after six months of ownership, leading Piotr with rather an important decision to make: fix, or upgrade?

The mental cogs had already started to turn from the first day, as the 'Rado had been bought from a collector who'd left it standing and unused for a number of years; while it did manage to complete the 300km journey back to Piotr's home, the tyres were shot, and the wipers and indicators didn't work. So this 'fix or upgrade' quandary had been buzzing along from the start, and when the blower blew it was simply a case of scaling up the question. "With the supercharger ruined, it wasn't too crazy an idea



17-inch chromed BBS
RS with 2.5-inch lips and
215/35 Hankook tyres



The gleaming muscle of a 3.6-litre VR6



to swap a different engine into it," he reasons. "And to be honest, the VR6 swap was a bit of a coincidence – I'd had no overarching concept for the car from the beginning, and it wasn't as if I was planning to VR it all along. That said, I'd bought this other engine because it came up at a good price, and it just made sense to fit the VR6 to the Corrado."

Don't go thinking this was an effort to upgrade the stock 160bhp G60 to a stock 190bhp VR6 though. The engine you're looking at here (as you'll already have deduced if you've read the numbers on it) is no 1990s-spec 12-valve 2.9. The VAG boffins continued to develop this six-shooter over the generations, ultimately arriving at a 24-valve FSI variant with a 3.6-litre displacement. This engine can be found in various levels of tune in the VW Passat R36, Skoda Superb 4x4, VW Phaeton, and Porsche Cayenne. As you can see from Piotr's motor, Audi had a crack at it too – his engine is in Q7-spec, meaning 280bhp from the showroom. That's enough, in standard form, to take the Q7 from 0-62mph in eight seconds... but the Q7 weighs over two tonnes, and has a complex AWD system.

The Corrado does not. So it's not hard to imagine how devastatingly fast this makes the little coupé, especially as the engine's now running a custom exhaust system and intercooler, taking it to somewhere around 300bhp. That's a bit brawnier than your average Corrado VR6, isn't it?

NINETIES ROOTS

"At that time, there weren't many R36-swapped Corrados about," says Piotr. "I decided to really do it properly, to make it look like the engine had been installed from the factory. I wanted to connect the engine with its classic nineties roots."

So the motor was completely cleaned and painted before installation, Piotr mating it to a Mk4 Golf VR6 6-speed manual gearbox (as the Q7 slushbox wouldn't have been any fun), before continuing the theme throughout the rest of the chassis: every possible element of the underside was sanded and powdercoated, every conceivable bolt and screw galvanised, and every part that was possible to replace with a new-old-stock item was swapped out. Body-wise, the exterior was fastidiously restored to factory freshness before being treated to a bare-metal repaint in the car's original shade of red.

"The interior is the great work of Sitzcar," he grins, Sitzcar being the go-to guys for custom high-end retrimms in Poland. "I fitted the Recaro CS seats from a Renault Sport Clio, and everything has been trimmed in a mix of Alcantara and Porsche leather – the seats, dash, headlining, doorcards, even the carpets! I made a few upgrades to the audio with Morel Tempo components, although the real soundtrack is that engine. I also fitted a Weichers rollcage. And everything that couldn't be covered in leather or Alcantara is now carbon fibre, thanks to Carsdream, who also took the stock steering wheel and decreased its diameter."



The car's had audio upgrades, but the real soundtrack is this engine



“I decided to do it properly. I wanted to connect the engine with its classic nineties roots”



Full retrim in Porsche leather and Alcantara (including dash and carpets)



Weichers rollcage





The approach is intriguing. At once radically altering the drivetrain with the intention of making it look OEM-ish, while also totally transforming the interior into a mix of premium luxo-swank and balls-to-the-wall road-racer, and it's this fusion of styles that informs the chassis upgrades too. Because you can't really throw 300bhp into a stock Corrado and expect it to cope, it'll get all hissy. So Piotr's fitted a set of KW V2 coilovers and Weichers strut braces along with a 4-pot front brake conversion and Mk4 Golf stoppers at the rear, so everything's up to snuff underneath. And we have to say he's played a blinder with the wheels – chrome rims are a stylistic tightrope and can go badly wrong, but when you're talking about a set of staggered BBS RS with 2.5-inch lips, you're right in the sweet spot for retro 1990s modding with a sprinkle of modern flavour.

"The build was carried out over one winter," says Piotr. "It took around 800 hours all-in, working on it every afternoon and weekend." You have to admire that level of commitment. Once the idea to transplant the engine was decided upon, he had a vision in his head and he tirelessly chased after it to make it real. A full body resto, a custom interior, a mighty modern engine, and all finished to better-than-OEM quality. That'd be impressive if someone took five years over it, but to complete it in a few short months while freezing in the garage is little short of heroic. So yes, there's a whole lot of engine in this Corrado – and there's also a whole lot of heart. ■

Impressively, the build was carried out in just one winter

TECH SPEC: VW CORRADO

Styling

Full OEM bare-metal resto and repaint.

Tuning

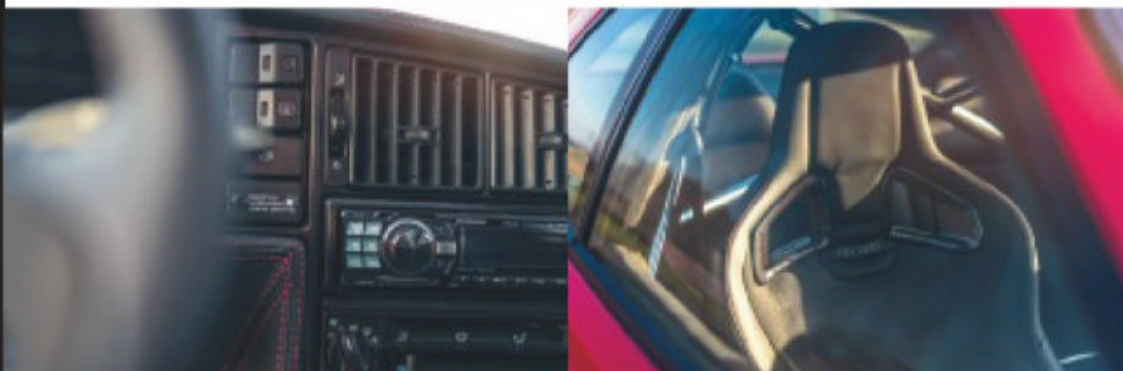
3.6-litre VR6; custom intercooler; Mocal oil cooler; custom 2.75in exhaust system; 6-speed manual with short-shift.

Chassis

9x17in (front) and 9.5x17in (rear) chromed BBS RS with 2.5in lips; 215/35 Hankook tyres; 5x100 hubs; KW V2 coilovers; Weichers strut braces; 4-pot front callipers with 312mm discs; Mk4 Golf rear callipers with 288mm discs.

Interior

Full retrim in Porsche leather and Alcantara (including dash and carpets); Recaro CS seats (from Renaultsport Clio); Weichers rollcage; plastic trim replaced with carbon fibre; decreased-diameter Corrado steering wheel; Morel Tempo audio.



“There's a whole lot of engine in this Corrado – and there's also a whole lot of heart”





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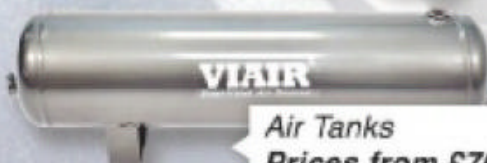
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Ultimate Dubs 2019

By the time we get to March, there have been a fair few car shows across the UK already. But for a lot of people, the true season opener is Ultimate Dubs. Held at the vast Telford International Centre, this get-together has been showcasing the best and brightest of the British VAG scene since its inception in 2006. Of course, as anyone who's been to it in recent years will well know, it's not just a VAG show any more. The 'Dubs' in the name ties the show into its core values from its genesis 13 years ago. But now the doors are equally open to other marques, as long as they fit into the key criteria of what makes a UD-worthy car. And what are these criteria? Look over these photos, you'll get the idea....

This year's show brought us a frankly mind-blowing selection of top-flight builds, from firm favourites that have been evolving over the years to fresh new revelations that had been built specifically with an Ultimate Dubs debut in mind.

As ever, the show halls bristled with mouthwatering cars. But there was plenty more to enjoy outside and we particularly enjoyed the growing retro flavour of what was on display. So make some notes of your favourite cars at Ultimate Dubs and you can compare and contrast when the equally huge Ultimate Stance comes in November to bookend the season. It looks like 2019's going to be quite a year!



OUT THERE



Three. It's the magic number

Car of the show for us had to be Ben Deavall's Mk3 Golf. This thing is just so ridiculously clean, and you can tell every single decision has been considered with the utmost care, before being flawlessly executed. The whole thing's brimming with cool details, from the delicious Recaros and towering CAE shifter, to the perfect 'cage-and-air-install interior combo. The bare-shell resto, smoothing and respray is flawless. Every inch of the engine, transmission and chassis components is super-fresh. And just check out the way it sits over those Schmidt splits. The Mk3 platform has been growing in popularity recently and Ben's car really shows how it's done right.

We weren't alone in loving this build either. The judges saw fit to award the Mk3 Best in Show – and it also scooped Best Engine' Keep an eye out for this car at the shows in 2019. It's simply outstanding.





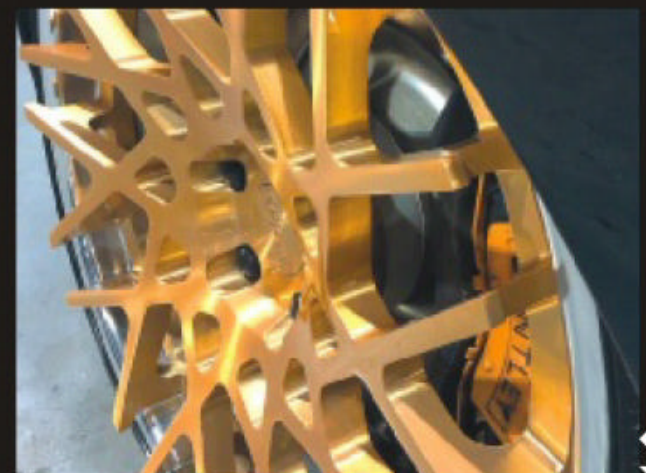
The wheel deal

Wheels, as the old saying goes, maketh the car. And we're really lucky these days to be so well served by the aftermarket. There's been a huge amount of choice in the wheel market for generations, but the days of being largely limited to off-the-shelf offerings unless you were filthy rich are long gone. These days there are plenty of companies offering desirable designs with the option of bespoke fitment, and the granddaddy of them all is Rotiform.

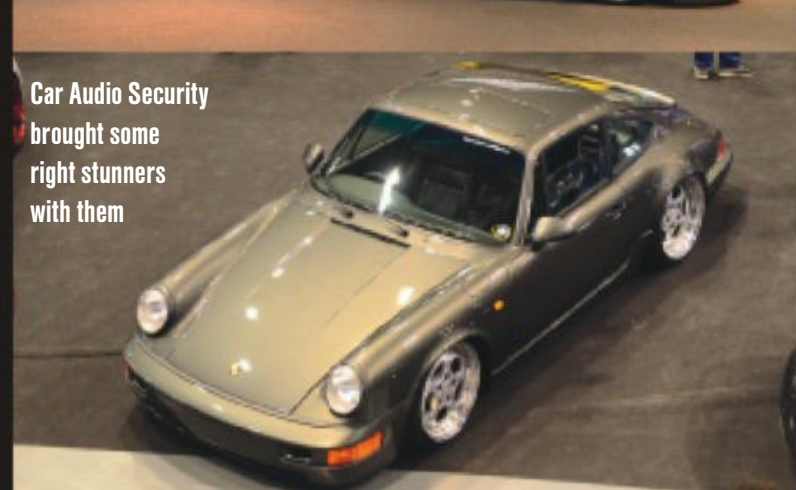
The company's been around for a decade now, and as you can see by the wheels on display at UD 2019, they're not showing any signs of slowing down. Indeed, this company's dominance appears near-total. We've got to the stage where the BLQ is almost ironically retro, and the guys have fresh new designs coming out all the time – all hand-made in the States, all customisable to your own specs if you so desire. It seems obvious to say that UD and Rotiform go hand-in-hand, but look around you: 10 years in, and everyone's still digging on the vibe.



Full feature coming soon



OUT THERE



↘ Mirror, mirror, on the wall...

We think one of the big trends of 2019 will be mirror tints. Shiny windows were spreading all over UD like wildfire. Traditional black window tints have long been popular, they make your car look gangsta cool and offer a bit of privacy and mystique. Mirror tints have been around for a while in the commercial sector, but this is the first time we've seen so many modders embracing the reflective window concept. If we wanted to have a go at analysing the psychology of it in-depth, we could perhaps speculate that it's a post-modern way of reflecting the very nature of the car show itself: look at my car and find you're looking back at yourself. Or perhaps it's just because they look awesome? Yeah, that's probably it. Either way, mirror tints are where it's at this year.



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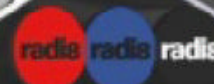
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FC FAVOURITES WHEELS

Wheels are a hugely personal choice. We couldn't bring you one overview of our faves, because we'd all have a big falling out! So here's part one of our FC Favourite Wheels series. This month Slim Jules shares his thoughts...

I have bought my fair share of wheels over the past 15 years. In fact my garage is currently home to three sets of hoops, including a custom set of three-piece 3SDMs. But what are my favourites wheels right now? Well, I've narrowed them down to these five choices, which I think covers most of the market, from base model hatchback to high-end supercars...

AutoStar A510, £659 (set)

It would be a bit hypocritical of me not to include my most recent wheel purchase in my favourite wheels feature, so here they are, AutoStar's A510s, which I fitted to my E92 335i.

So why do I love them so much? Well, for me, I don't think there is a better value 19-inch wheel on the market in hyper black. Not only that, but the aggressive (Et30 front and Et22 rear) offset gives my air-equipped E92 a near perfect flush fitment.

www.nuts4wheels.com

Sizes: 9.5 and 10.5x19

PCD: 5x120, 5x114.3

Finishes: Hyper black



Radi8 r8cm9, from £696 (set)

We all have our favourite wheel brands, but even in their respective ranges they'll be a couple of offerings that just aren't your cuppa tea. But this can't be said for me and Radi8 wheels. I love all their offerings, especially the r8cm9 we have here. The only downside is that they don't offer all the finishes on all of the available fitments, especially for BMW owners like me. But there's a much bigger choice for the VAG fraternity.

www.radi8wheels.com

Sizes: 8.5x18, 8.5 and 10x19, x20

PCD: 5x100, 5x112, 5x120

Finishes: Matt silver with machined face, black with machined face, gold brush, dark mist





ESM-015, from \$145 (each)

If you're on a budget but desire a flashy VIP-style rim in chrome or platinum gold then these VIP-style rims from American wheel firm ESM are the wheels for you. I'm not usually a fan of fake splits, but I reckon these ESM-015s would look very tidy on a small hatch and will definitely get you noticed at your next show, especially in that blingy gold finish. The 15s come in at around £100 a wheel, but don't forget to add shipping and import tax on to that price. What ESM really need is a UK distributor to take away that pain!

www.esmwheels.com

Sizes: 8 and 9x15, 8 and 9x16, 9x17, 9.5 and 11x18, 11x19

PCD: 4x100, 5x120, 5x114.3

Finishes: White polished, chrome, gold platinum



Rotiform RSE, £999.99

Now this is a bit of a weird one, because the RSE isn't my favourite Rotiform Monoblock, not by a long shot (that accolade goes to their recently launched CVT – which is a proper stunner). So why on Earth have I included it in my FC Favourites? One word; AeroDisc. Yup, the RSE is one of two wheels (the other is the LAS-R, which I like even less) that currently allows the fitment of the thread-on wheel fan. These discs are awesome and completely change the appearance of your wheels in minutes for just £129 (a corner). And you can even print off designs to stick on them. So you effectively get endless looks for almost the price of one. The price above is for the 8.5x19-inch that allows the AeroDisc fitment.

www.caraudiosecurity.com

Sizes: 8&9x17, 8.5&9.5x18, 8.5&10x19

PCD: 5x112, 5x120, 5x114, 4x100, 4x114

Finishes: Silver, anthracite



DREAM WHEEL

Vossen Forged LC2-A2, from £1315 (each)

That's right folks. For my money is no object wheel choice, I've gone for a single-piece wheel! And that really is testament to these ultra-desirable LC2-A2 custom rims from Vossen. Because believe me, there's a huge amount of three-piece wheels out there I'd happily sell my dear old nan for.

These wheels come in a number of different sized forgings (widths in half-inch increments from 8.5-13 inches and diameters from 19-24), along with a simply ridiculous amount of finish options. There's also a choice of lip and cap finishes, a personalised engraving option and even colour-matched wheel weights (and no, I'm not joking!).

www.prestigewheelcentre.co.uk

Sizes: 8.5-13x19, 8.5-13x20, 8.5-13x21, 8.5-12.5x22, 10, 11 and 12x23, 10x24

PCDs: Any five-stud, custom centre-lock

Offset: Any

Finishes: Any gloss, satin, matt or textured powder coat included, any polished, brushed and custom finish (POA)



NEXT MONTH: Midge picks his top five hoops

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Words **Stav** Photography **Davy Lewis**

LUCKY DIP

Buying online from a Japanese auction is a gamble. But sometimes you hit the jackpot...



Buying a car without going to view and drive it is generally a pretty bad idea. You literally have to take the seller's word for it when it comes down to the car's spec and condition. You're risking buying a piece of junk and financial disaster.

But what if you want to buy a car from Japan? Well, from a dealer or a third-party specialist you should hopefully be able to get some good honest details, but what about buying something you've spotted literally minutes earlier for sale at a large car auction in Japan?

A few small pictures, a very vague description of specification and condition, and no driving information at all barring the fact they managed to drive it to the auction block is all the help you're going to get.

Despite this lack of info, doing what most people used to buying cars in the UK would consider to be a massive risk is quite common when buying tuned cars from Japan.

The risk is usually outweighed by the reward, and this car is a great example of that.

ENTER THE DRAGON

This car was brought in to the UK by Ross Juniper, MD of Dragon Performance, and while he's imported countless highly tuned cars from Japan over the years so realises the risks involved, he also knows the amazing cars at amazing prices that can be bought and imported if you have a keen eye for modified cars, and of course a little bit of luck...

"I'm a big fan of how they tune cars in Japan, and always keep my eye on the auctions to see if anything special comes up that I want to buy, and when this car appeared, I couldn't resist" says Ross. "It wasn't cheap, as GT-R prices are going through the roof these days. But from what I



HOT RIDE



could see in the pics and what the auction sheet said, it looked to be a great spec car. So I went for it”.

Fast forward a few months and the car is finally in the UK at the Dragon workshops, and while it wasn't a gleaming show car – in fact it's clearly a car to be used hard on road and track – it soon became apparent the car was far more special than the basic auction spec list made it seem.

“I got it up on the ramps once it was here to inspect it, as I thought the spec list was too good to be true. But it really was all it seemed and more” said Ross.

What we have here is a genuine R32 GT-R, complete with heavily modified RB26DETT engine, converted to rear wheel drive, and running the Bee*R R324R body conversion, which gives the front end a R34 GT-R look, complete with genuine R34 headlamps, as well as much wider arches and an overall even more aggressive look than the standard GT-R. To be honest though, while that basic spec is impressive enough, that's barely scratching the surface of the special parts this car is covered in.

One of the first things Ross noticed that wasn't on the auction sheet, was that chassis has been fully stitch-welded, something only done to serious race cars to increase shell stiffness and requires the car to be stripped to a bare shell to be done. It also has the HKS V-CAM setup, a rare and expensive upgrade that converts the inlet cam to variable timing, improving spool up and torque at lower rpm without sacrificing high rpm power. Whatever this car was built for, it wasn't for show, and money really wasn't an issue.

“The first proper drive of the car was proof enough to me how well the car was set up. It was seriously impressive, and even at 8000rpm in 5th the car felt totally stable and planted” says Ross. On a private road, of course officer...



They even double as microphones

FORGOTTEN HISTORY

This car was clearly something quite special, though with so many cars tuned in Japan the history becomes forgotten about. But from what we saw and experienced on the photoshoot, and what Ross explained himself, we decided to do some investigating ourselves, and realised this car is even more special than any of us realised.

It's the Bee*R drift demo car from around 2004, which was featured, albeit with less modifications than it has now, in various Option and Best Motoring videos in Japan, being driven hard on track and the Touge by famous racing driver Max Ordo, former D1 champion Yasuyuki Kazama, and the Drift King himself, Keiichi Tsuchiya.

At first we wasn't 100 percent sure, as while the bodywork, paint and engine were identical, rumour had

Heavily tuned RB26DETT running steel conrods, forged pistons and HKS GT-SS twin turbos



“Even at 8000rpm in 5th the car felt totally stable and planted”



BEE*R

While probably most famous for their noisy and flame throwing after-market rev limiters, Japanese company Bee*R are one of the original Skyline GT-R tuners, tuning and racing them since 1990, just after the first release of the R32 GT-R, and long before most of us had ever heard of these legendary cars. By 1995 they had already achieved 9-second quarter-mile times and over 200mph top speed from their tuned GT-Rs. And they've continued to modify them to this day.

As well as the car in this feature, they've built many other wild ones over the years, including various D1 drift cars, a S15 Silvia featuring a twin charged (ie both turbo and supercharged) SR20 engine, and a R33 GT-R drag car that ran 8-second quarter-miles even in the late 1990s!



Bee*R flip-up steering boss





Bride Zeta bucket seat,
Nardi steering wheel and
full roll cage

TECH SPEC: R32 GT-R

Engine

RB26DETT 2.6ltr 24v inline six cylinder twin turbo; N1 engine block, steel conrods; forged pistons; HKS V-CAM variable inlet cam system; HKS camshafts; clear cam cover; HKS GT-SS twin turbos; HKS intercooler pipes; HKS front mount intercooler; Greddy fuel rail; 740cc injectors; HKS fuel pressure regulator; HPI engine damper; HKS air filters; Z32 MAF sensors; HKS downpipes; braided fuel lines; high flow fuel pump; 3.5-inch exhaust system; Greddy boost controller; remote oil filter; oil cooler with braided lines; modified sump; uprated radiator; Apexi PowerFC ECU.

Transmission

RWD conversion; Cusco 2way rear diff; solid diff mounts; OS Giken twin plate clutch.

Suspension

Ohlins coilovers; adjustable rear camber arms; Nismo rear lower arms; HICAS delete; Nismo front upper arms; fully stitch welded chassis; Kansai front strut brace; Cusco rear strut brace.

Wheels, tyres and brakes

9x18 (front) 11x18 (rear) Volk Racing GTM split rims; with 225/40x18 (front) and 265/35x18 (rear) tyres; F40 front brake callipers with 335mm 2-piece discs; R34 GT-R rear brake conversion.

Exterior

Full Bee*R 324R wide body (R34 front) conversion; Bee*R carbon rear wing; R34 GT-R headlamps; LED rear lamps; painted Midnight Purple.

Interior

Bride Zeta drivers bucket seat; Nardi steering wheel; Bee*R flip-up steering boss; Nismo 320km dials; Defi oil pressure gauge; Defi oil temp gauge; Defi water temp gauge; Apexi hand commander; Blitz I-D power meter; full roll cage; Greddy E-01 datalogger.

↘ always been that the Bee*R car was a HCR32 (ie a GTS-T with a GT-R engine fitted), and this was, according to the VIN number, a genuine BNR32 (ie a true GT-R), albeit converted to rear wheel drive. On further investigation, this turned out to be just that, a rumour, probably due to one of their even earlier demo cars being based on a GTS-T. The final clincher was if you view the videos carefully and freeze frame it during the in-car footage, you notice the amount of interior modifications, most quite rare and unusual, which not only feature in both cars, but are mounted in exactly the same places. If Orido, Kazama, and the Drift King were all impressed while flinging the thing flat out down a Japanese Touge, no wonder Ross was impressed with how the car drove!

So, what's next for this piece of JDM tuning history? Well, by the time you read this it will be with the new owner and be up to them to decide, as Ross has now sold the car. Does the new owner realise this car's past? Maybe not. Until they read this feature anyway... ■



Bee*R carbon rear wing and
LED rear lamps

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FAST PROJECTS



TOM'S R5 GT TURBO

Tom has been a busy bee this month, well, when we say Tom, we mean Reflex Auto Design.

START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: CUSTOM BILSTEIN COILOVERS • RENAULTSPORT SEATS • DIMMA BODYKIT





DALE'S 1971 MERCEDES W114

Dale decided to take a trip to Dorset this month, and it wasn't to see the sea and hunt for fossils.

START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: AIR RIDE SUSPENSION • COBRA SEATS RETRIM • DETROIT STEEL WHEELS





SLIM JULES' BMW E92

With over 450bhp on tap it was about time Jules did something about the stopping power of the 335i...

START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: ADVAN TYRES • AIR LIFT AIR RIDE • AUTOSTARS • HYBRID TURBOS • MILLTEK EXHAUST • FORGE FMIC





GLENDA'S AUDI RS4

It's been a positive month for our Glenda and we're not just talking about his insurance renewal.

START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: MILLTEK EXHAUST • KW COILOVERS • KENWOOD HEADUNIT





MIDGE'S AUDI TT

Midge has decided to sort out some winter rims for his TT just in time for summer. What a guy.

START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: 3M WRAP • VOSSEN WHEELS • AIR LIFT SUSPENSION • TUNED ENGINE • ICE INSTALL



MISSING IN ACTION




ZERO EV TESLA-POWERED R32 DRIFTER

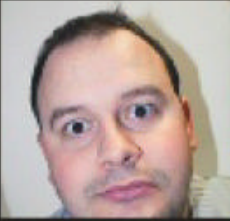
The Skyline has had its high profile shakedown. We just didn't have any cameras there to capture it!

START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: TESLA ELECTRIC MOTOR • PB COILOVERS • JAFFA CAKES • 19-INCH WHEELS






SLIM JULES' BMW E91

The BMW Touring isn't missing in action. Don't believe us? Check out page 44!

START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: HYDRO-DIPPED INTERIOR • BC COILOVERS • TINTS • DIAMOND CAR MATS • M SPORT CARBON WHEEL






MIDGE'S BEETLE 1.8T

Midge has been so busy with work that he only had time to modify Jules' E91 this month. True story.

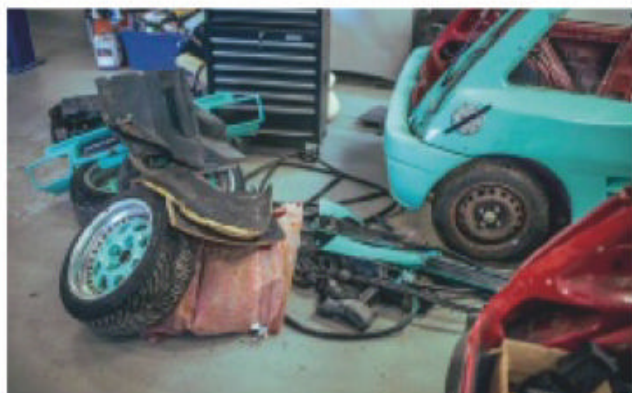
START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: K&N INDUCTION KIT • COBRA RECLINERS • SMOOTHED FRONT BUMPER • AIR LIFT • RUSTY PAINT



FAST PROJECTS



Tom V Dale

Everyone knows Meguiar's and if you read this magazine you'll also know that each year they build a fresh demo vehicle (we've featured the last two, the Crown Victoria Cop Car in 2017 and the Sunny Pickup in 2018). They don't just build these cars to showcase their products but to demonstrate their passion for vehicles. In essence the guys and girls behind Meguiar's UK are just like you and us: car nuts.

So what's Tom V Dale? Well, Tom and Dale are the Meguiar's guys responsible for the demo vehicles, and each year that they embark on the build journey, their conflicting styles and opinions on car building clash. So this year, the head honchos at Megs UK had enough of the bickering and told them to build a car each. And of course, being boys, this has escalated into a fierce battle to see who can build the better car. Both cars will be finished for Players Classic in June 2019 and we're going to follow the build right up until that final reveal.



TOM'S R5 GT TURBO



Name: Tom Clarke

Job Role: Marketer who oversees the UK marketing office, advert placement and key account marketing fulfilment.

Unless you have bad times, you can't appreciate the good times. That's what I keep reminding myself (and the guys at Reflex) when I look at the bare shell of my R5. It might actually look like we're going backwards here, but with the car finally stripped, the repair work can finally begin.

By this time next month, it'll be painted and all back together. OK, that's a bit of an exaggeration. But we're certainly moving in the right direction.

In other news, I've been busy sorting the main chassis components. First up, the wheels have been dropped off at The Wheel

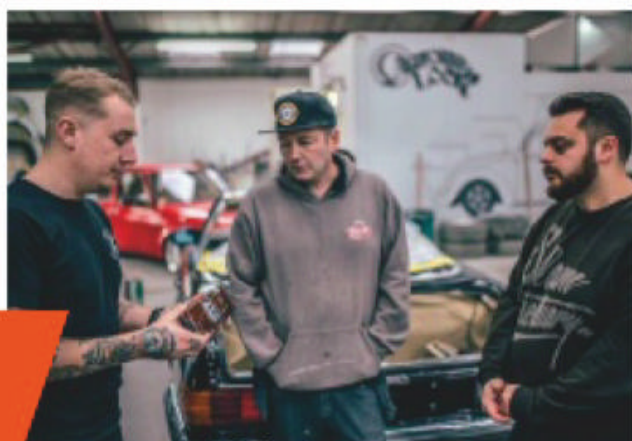
Specialist, in Fareham, where Olly is giving them a full makeover, including having the faces environmentally stripped before being covered in primer. The barrels are going black and the lips will be polished.

On the suspension side, I decided to drop into Bilstein UK and meet up with Aaron to discuss what could be done with the front springs and shocks. Aaron suggested a coil-over set-up and had some custom units made up. How's that for service?

Right, it's time to get back to Reflex and help with that bodywork. Pass me the sand paper, lads!

CONTACTS

www.meguiars.co.uk
www.reflexautodesign.com
www.bilstein.com
www.thewheelspecialist.co.uk



DALE'S 1971 MERCEDES W114



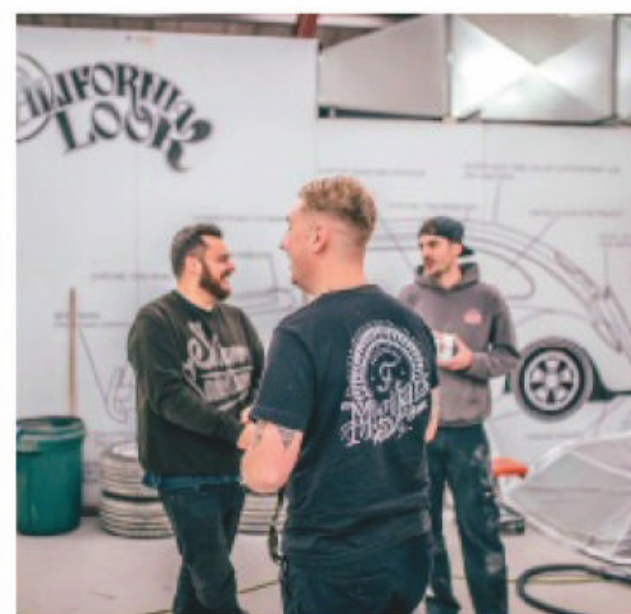
e: Dale Masterman

Role: Sales and marketing executive,
s coordinator and resident paint nerd.

So this month started with a trip down to see Kustom Kolors in Dorset, which is quite a trek from Meguiar's UK headquarters in Daventry. 132 miles to be precise. So why use them and not a more local firm?

Well, as you know, I spend a fair chunk of my time in the detailing bay, and whenever I've worked on a Kustom Kolors painted car, the quality of finish blows me away. Tom and I know our project builds will be scrutinised by showgoers, especially the paint, so I really wasn't prepared to compromise on this part of the car. Only the best will do!

We met up with Colin Ware from Kustom Kolors and Laura Harding from 3MUK to discuss the colour of the Merc. We finally set on Copper Sunset, which is actually a Peugeot colour. But the dark golden brown metallic will really pop and show off the classic lines of the W114.



CONTACTS

www.meguiars.co.uk
www.kustomkolors.co.uk



JULES' E92 335i

You can't beat a well-deserved break. But enough about my trip to Center Parcs and more about my E92's new stoppers...



Check out that before picture of my standard brake disc (see right). It's nasty, isn't it? And while a quick stamp on the middle pedal would get rid of that surface rust, it wouldn't get rid of the average stopping power of my E92. To be honest, sorting the brakes is one of those jobs I should have done after the tuning work was completed a couple of years back. The faster your car is the better brakes you need. It's basic logic.

So what has stopped me (no pun intended)? Well, originally I wanted to fit a big brake kit to sit behind the three-piece 3SDMs I had made. But BBKs aren't exactly cheap and back then I'd been hit in the wallet for the wheels, the paint and the tuning, so funds were a little tight. So I just left them standard. And that's

how they've remained, up until now. The dreaded MoT was looming and I knew the brakes would probably fail, and with the new Autostar alloys showing off the brakes more than the 3SDM 0.04s they replaced, the decision was made.

Now, while a BBK is the pinnacle of upgrades, the truth is I really don't use the E92 enough to warrant them, and I'm still toying with the idea of selling up and starting something new. So the perfect solution was to give EBC a call and order a set of USR slotted discs matched to their Yellowstuff pads. These not only look a million times better than the standard setup, but the braking performance is greatly improved, which is the primary reason for a brake upgrade! EBC do many different grades of pads,

to suit everything from your granny's Micra to a fully fledged race car. And after researching the different compounds on their website, I decided to opt for Yellowstuff. These have really good cold friction and great heat management too, making them perfect for road use but also suitable for track days.

I've driven the car approximately three miles since having them fitted, so I can't really give you a test verdict, but I will report back once the car has a fresh ticket and I've bedded them in. But I already know they'll be awesome, because I've used this set-up on many past project cars, and no doubt will again in the future.

The by-product of this latest upgrade? They look a million times better than the originals too. A right Bobby bonus!



Before: The discs and pads
have seen better days



We have no idea why they
call them Yellowstuff?



Off with the old...



... in with the new



EBC Brakes don't just make you stop
better, they look good too

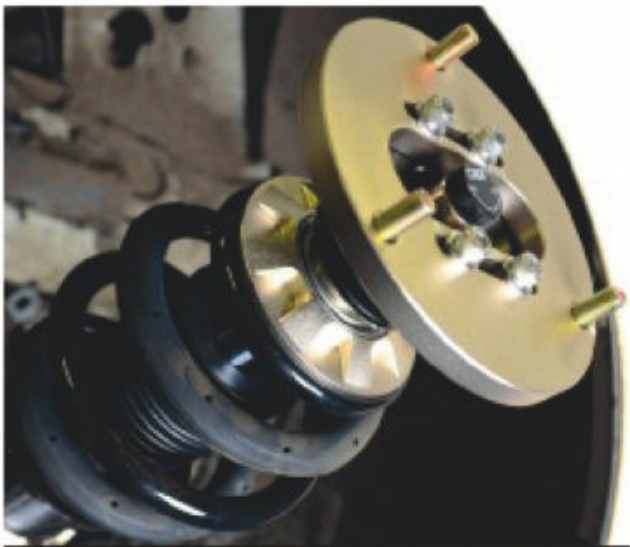
THIS MONTH

Yellowstuff pads & USR discs (F)..... £366.66
Yellowstuff pads & USR discs (R) £287.96

Total £654.62

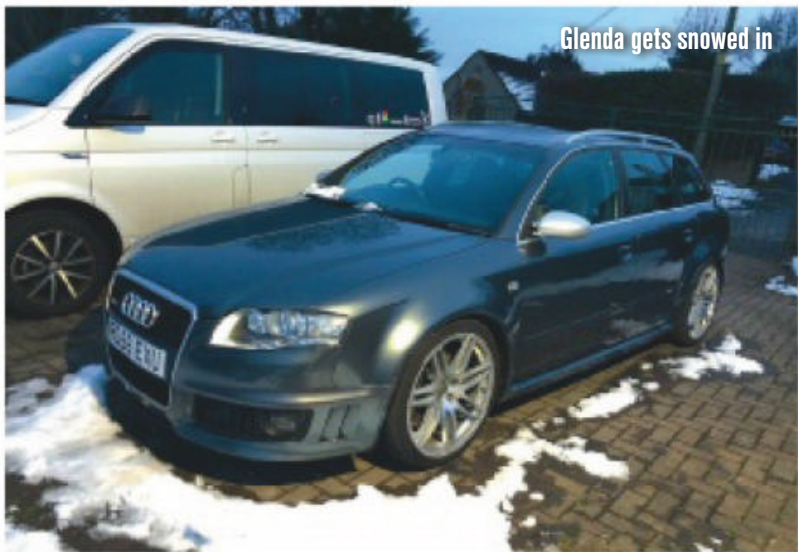
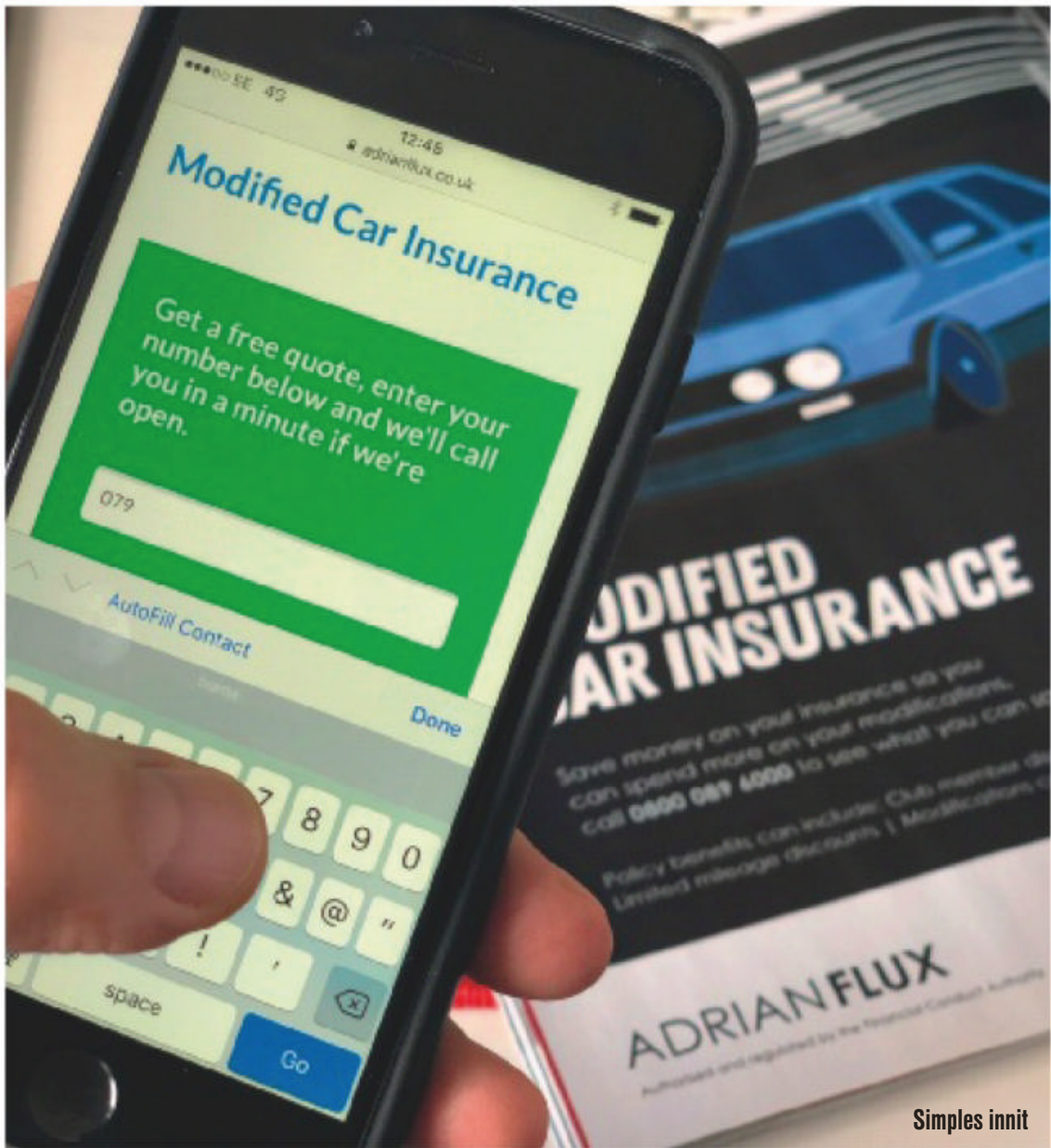
CONTACTS

www.ebcbrakes.com



NEXT MONTH

Time to get back on my other BMW, and report
back on the fitted (see page 44) BC coilovers. Yay.



GLENDA'S AUDI RS4 AVANT

Power issues, insurance premiums and being stuck in the white stuff...



It's hard to believe as I sit in the sun, drinking coffee and writing this. But just a few short weeks ago the country was covered in snow. I know many people are not fans of the white stuff, but I love it. Especially as I've got an RS4, Quattro power and the driving skills of Stig Blomqvist (you wish – Jules). Well maybe not.

Therefore, imagine my delight as I jump in the Avant, turn the key and press the push start to be greeted with nothing but silence. Yep. It seems my battery had other ideas.

Balls! Luckily for me though it takes more than a bit of bad weather to stop the guys at the Battery Megastore, who assured me a new battery would be at my door the following day, all ready to be hooked up. And it was. But then I guess that's why they're the UK's number one online battery retailer.

It was just a shame the snow had already melted by then. Sob. Maybe next year...

Another thing that meant I wasn't going anywhere fast was that my insurance was up for renewal. And as Sheriff John Bunnell would say: "The only place you're going with no car insurance is the slammer!" With my pretty face and pert bottom, that's not a place I want to visit. So I did the sensible thing and got on the blower to Adrian Flux.

Last year was my first time getting insurance for the RS4 so I rung around. But it was a waste of time. So this year I tried a select few, but none of them could beat Adrian Flux on either the quote or service.

It has to be said, there's something nice and reassuring about talking to an insurer that understands performance and modified cars. So a big thanks to Christopher Poynter at Adrian Flux. He made sure I left with an agreed value for the RS4, a protected no claims bonus and all my modifications were declared and covered. Also, he sorted out a great deal that means I can pay my premium

in 10 monthly instalments rather than one big chunk and it wasn't that much more expensive either. And that's good news for me, as it means I can finally start looking at sorting out some new wheels and planning a visit to Revo for some more power. Lovely!

THIS MONTH	
Adrian Flux Insurance Premium.....	£970
(10 monthly payments)	
Hankook MF57220 Car Battery	£53
Total:	£1,023

CONTACTS

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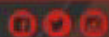
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FAST PROJECTS



MIDGE’S AUDI TT

Smart old Midge finally gets himself some winter wheels...
Um, right in time for summer!



I live in a place called Dartford. And, if you’ve ever been lucky enough to visit, you’ll already know that it’s a magical little hamlet where the beer is always cold, the sun is always shining, and every young lady looks like she stepped straight off the catwalk in Milan. I’ve been told, it’s the very reason Kent is commonly called the garden of England.

OK, yeah. It’s actually eff-all like that. But there are many other wonderful attributes to my home town. We have a tunnel where you pay £2.50 to move about three feet every hour, a bridge which they shut as soon as the wind gets up enough to blow an empty crisp packet down the road, and perhaps most importantly, more potholes than the surface of the moon.

But what does all this socio-geography chat mean for my little Audi?

Well, I have to admit that rolling round on a set of seriously expensive, fully-forged Vossen 19s isn’t always ideal around here. In fact, by the time I’ve had the chance to unpucker my anus when I get home, it’s nearly time to go out again.

Now, don’t get me wrong, I love my flashy hoops and they look amazing. I’d just like to keep them that way for the coming show season. So, for daily-ish driving duties, I’ve been looking around for a set of reasonably priced rims to try and delay the chances of an impending heart attack.

Anyway, you’ll probably know that I write the Fresh Kit section in FC, so when I saw these AutoStar Essens a few months ago, I instantly knew that these are the ones for my TT. I’m a bit old skool if I’m honest (you just mean old – Jules) and the classic mesh design is right up my street.

And as for those ‘fake’ bolts? Well I’m definitely too long in the tooth to worry about that sort of shit. Besides, I like ‘em, and you just can’t argue with the price anyway. They’re almost disposable at that money!

I ordered a set of ET35, 5x112s in 8.5 and 9.5x18, which may make you wonder why I’ve chosen smaller wheels in the wrong PCD. But there is a method to my madness. First, I’ve had a set of Yokohama tyres sitting around for a couple of years,

so they’ll go straight on. Second, I know how perfectly this car drove on the staggered 18-inch Lionhart wheels I had on there before (they don’t actually make my Vossen x Works any smaller than 19s you see). And lastly, the 15 and 20mm adaptors I already have from my old wheels (which were only made in 5x112 in 2013) will bring down the offsets to right where I want them for better fitment. You’ve got to think about all this stuff, right?

There is one little thing I haven’t had time for this month of course, and that’s bolting ‘em on. Possibly because of all this working for a living rubbish (er, when was this then? – Initial G). So, I’m gonna bugger off and do that now...

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NOBODY PUTS BABY IN THE CORNER



Some people call the Gallardo 'the baby Lambo'.
These people presumably haven't seen what 2,300bhp can do...

Words: **Daniel Bevis** PHOTOGRAPHY: **Mike Kuhn**



WILD CARD



The engine has been blueprinted and features twin billet 62mm Precision turbos, Tial billet wastegates and BOVs

We live in exciting times for the supercar genre.

As is well-documented, the term was originally coined for the Lamborghini Miura way back in 1966 – a car that transcended everyday transport, it was stunning to look at and moved faster than anyone at the time could comfortably cope with. For generations, that iconic word, supercar, has held children in its thrall and grown-ups spellbound.

And these days? The goalposts have moved. The game's moved on so much that we've formulated a new term, 'hypercar'. Some of these otherworldly machines fuse up-to-the-minute hybrid tech with improbable aero to achieve their scientifically challenging ends, others stick rigidly to the classic big-engine big-horsepower formula. But they're all doing things we once never believed possible.



Some of the bits that help this car reach 226.59mph in a standing half mile

Of course, as much as the manufacturers endeavour to cram ever-more improbable levels of technology and spaceship-performance into their latest bedroom-wall-poster machines, so the aftermarket is always keen to take a step back, view the performance landscape with an objective eye, and develop means to apply the latest hypercar performance to the previous generation of supercars. Imagine if you could take, say, the power of the Lamborghini Aventador SVJ and squeeze it into something with the footprint of the Huracán, maximising power-to-weight and exponentially ramping up the inherent drama? That would condense the entire model range into one fabulous entity.

Well, you don't need to imagine such a thing. Underground Racing exists to carry out just such lunatic endeavours – with a unique twist. If you take them, for example, a 12-year-old Gallardo and give them the brief to make it quicker than any new hypercar, they're happy to oblige. Sounds unlikely? Feast your eyes on the Nardo Grey 2007 Gallardo you see before you. It may look relatively stock, but there isn't a single manual-transmission car in the world that can beat it over the half mile. And that, my friends, is a verified fact.

GOING MAINSTREAM

As a base for a project, the bone-stock Gallardo is already a pretty savage thing. It's the car that really pushed Lamborghini into the volume-selling mainstream. Production ran from 2003-2013 and they shifted over 14,000 units – unprecedented numbers for the company. The first-generation Gallardo, like the one we have before Mike's lens today, came equipped with a 5.0-litre V10 producing a nice round 500bhp. It would run 0-62mph in 4.2 seconds straight out of the box and go on to 196mph. Standing

This Gallardo can reach 226.59mph in a standing half-mile, something no other manual car in the world can do

“There isn’t a single manual-transmission car in the world that can beat it over the half mile”



quarter-mile? An unstressed 12 seconds. Some people may call it the ‘baby Lambo’, but don’t go thinking it’s not thoroughly grown-up. Naturally, however, such things can always be made more aggressive – and, inevitably, faster. 500bhp? It’s a nice starting point. But how about doubling that? Or trebling it? Or more?

That was the key driver for Murad Alzuraiki, owner of this startling grey brute. Known to friends as Moe, he employed the services of Underground Racing to take his Gallardo to the next level – and ended up several levels beyond that.

“I’ve always modified my cars because I love to go fast,” Moe laughs. “I’ve had this Lamborghini since 2011 and when I bought it, it was the perfect platform for Underground Racing. I’m a long-time friend and customer of theirs. We work as a team and I knew they’d bring my vision to life – an unbeatably powerful car that I could still use every day.”

Underground Racing are a bit like a cult. If you scroll through the customer build list on their website, you’ll find well over 80 big-horsepower conversions.

And that’s just for the first-gen Gallardos. They also offer massive power enhancements for the LP560, Huracán, Aventador and Murciélago, as well as Audi’s R8 in both V8 and V10 guise, and the Ferrari F430 and 458.

The official tuning menu lists five upgrade options for the early Gallardo, although Moe’s is something rather special even beyond that. The first option available is for the firm’s Stage 1 twin-turbo setup to be fitted to the stock V10 motor, an arrangement which will provide 700bhp on pump fuel, or up to 900bhp on race fuel. The next step up is to have the Stage 2 turbo system bolted to a modified engine: they’ll upgrade the internals with forged pistons and stronger rods, the whole thing will be blueprinted and balanced, and you’ll be on the way to 850bhp on pump fuel or 1,150bhp on race fuel.

Staggering numbers, right? But we’re only at the second stage. The Stage 3 option adds further engine mods to allow 1,250bhp, the next step is unsightly called Race Version, which brings you up to 1,500bhp,



WILD CARD



The interior is stock
(if it ain't broke...)



A whopping 2,300bhp
on a manual six-speed

➔ and the final act of lunacy is Stage 2 Race, at which point you'll be staring down the barrel of 1,750bhp and the very foundations of the Earth itself will have started to shift and crumble.

But even this act of certifiable craziness wasn't sufficient for Moe's heady aspirations. He didn't want to just be ludicrously fast – he wanted to be so fast that nobody could catch him. So he's worked closely with Underground Racing to tailor a unique and eye-watering spec for his Gallardo, side-stepping the mainstream menu and going à la carte. The engine has been blueprinted and features twin billet 62mm Precision turbos, Tial billet wastegates and BOVs, and a custom-fabricated stainless steel exhaust system with ultra-lightweight silencers. It inhales through a mighty stainless steel ram-air induction arrangement with hungry K&N filters, and inside the block reside custom CP reverse-dish aluminium pistons with Carillo

rods and custom steel cylinder sleeves. The fuelling is frankly massive, and it's all overseen by AEM engine management to keep everything safe as well as utterly ballistic. The ice water reservoir is a neat touch, allowing Moe to significantly reduce charge temperatures by pouring in a bunch of ice before a high-speed run.

Perhaps the most notable feature of this car, aside from the near-unbelievable horsepower, is the fact it's still running a six-speed manual gearbox. There are no e-Gear chicanery or motorsport sequentials here. Simply a billet gearset inside the standard 'box. Now this car's running 2,300bhp, a figure you may need to absorb for a moment. With potential for up to 2,500bhp depending on setup – there's much about the engine spec that Moe would prefer to keep secret. That's a lot of grunt to entrust to your wrist and your left ankle.



“I knew Underground Racing could bring my vision to life: an unbeatably powerful car I could still use every day”



WORLD RECORD

Thankfully Moe’s limber extremities are up to the task. Indeed, in August 2018 he took a World Record in this amusingly frightening machine, reaching 226.59mph in a standing half-mile. This particular record has been pinballing about between five different Underground Racing customers for the better part of a decade now, and it’s Moe’s combination of stratospheric horsepower and steady hand on the tiller that netted him the accolade. This is the fastest 6-speed Gallardo there is. It’s as simple as that.

What surprises most Lambo aficionados about this car is the relative levels of stealth. OK, you could never describe any Lamborghini as a sleeper, they’re way too ostentatious for that. But to the untrained eye this appears to be nothing more extraordinary than a mainstream, factory-spec Gallardo. The fact it’s painted in subtle Nardo Grey further adds to the under-the-radar mystique; a fashion-forward shade fans affectionately know as ‘shiny primer’, it helps Moe to blend in with the traffic as much as is possible in such a machine. Indeed, there are only four clues that give away the simmering malevolence that resides beneath that engine lid: firstly, the wheels. They’re HRE C103 forged three-piece split-rims, their 19-inch diameter chosen to offer the ideal mix of acceleration and top-end; HRE competition-spec wheels are incredibly light and strong, and Moe’s wrapped his in sticky Toyo R888R rubber. The second hint that all’s not quite factory is the Superleggera rear spoiler – although, to be fair, a lot of owners do that. The third? It’s those mighty tailpipes, which do have a tendency to spit huge blue flames when angered. And finally, above all, there’s the incredible noise this car makes, an aggressive crescendo of growls, rumbles, whooshing sounds and wastegate chatter. It sounds like an entire fairground has been squeezed inside the diminutive Sant’Agata sweetheart. It heralds chaos like a binary supernova.

But let’s not forget Moe’s original brief: an unbeatably powerful car I could still use every day.

Surely not? “I drive this car around town every day, just like any other car,” he assures us. “It’s very docile, it has air-con and all the factory options. It just also happens to have well over 2,000bhp.”

Put like that, the logic is impeccable. The original spirit of the Miura, refracted through a 21st-century filter, with next-gen power and everyday usability. It’s the perfect car: trundle to work through the week, set a world speed record on Saturday before cruising to the drive-thru, then head out for a spirited Sunday blast. Keep your Regeras and your Speedtails. This Gallardo can do anything. ■



TECH SPEC: LAMBORGHINI GALLARDO

STYLING

Stock Gallardo with Superleggera rear wing; Nardo Grey.

TUNING

5.0-litre V10, blueprinted and balanced; twin billet 62mm Precision turbos; Tial billet wastegates and BOVs; custom-fabricated stainless steel exhaust system with ultra-lightweight silencers; custom stainless steel ram-air induction with K&N filters; custom air/water intercooler with upgraded water pump; high-flow heat exchanger; ice water reservoir; crankcase ventilation system; silicone hoses; custom heat-shielding; custom CP reverse-dish aluminium pistons; Carillo rods; CP spiral locks and wrist pins; custom steel cylinder sleeves; twin high-flow fuel pumps on billet hangers; Aeroquip stainless fuel lines; Aeromotive adjustable fuel pressure regulator; upgraded fuel injectors; AEM engine management; GReddy electronic boost controller; billet manual 6-speed gearbox.

CHASSIS

19in HRE C103 wheels; Toyo R888R tyres; stock suspension and brakes.

INTERIOR

Stock Gallardo

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READERS' RIDES



JORDAN DE CARVALHO'S HONDA CIVIC SEDAN

FC says: The fourth-gen Civic sedan is fast becoming one of the trendiest cars you can get your hands on if you're clued up on your scene-friendly motors, especially when it's finished in the infamously retro Cappuccino Brown Metallic colour scheme like young Jordan's beauty here.

Frenchman Jordan travelled all the way to the UK back in early 2017 to get his hands on a slice of the Civic Sedan magic, and it's fair to say he's gone on to

create something truly wonderful in the two years since with this decked stunner. Now rocking a range-topping Air Lift Performance air suspension system and propped up on those extremely rare three-piece Mugen rims, he was sending off a clear message from the very start of his build: only the best would do!

It's why you'll also find goodies like a B16 VTEC motor now tucked away in the immaculate engine bay, adding more than a few extra ponies into the mix.

This immaculate slice of Honda history proves that often less is more in the world of car modifying. The clean, boxy lines and fully re-vamped interior mean this is one of the finest examples of the mighty Sedan left on the road. Top work, Jordan!



A VTEC spices things up a bit



Main mods:

B16A1 VTEC engine swap; tucked and shaved bay; pre-facelift rear lights and door mouldings; JDM rear bumper; smoked wind deflectors; front foglight; US-spec Mk3 Civic front lip; smoked headlights; re-vamped interior with OEM parts; CR-X gauge cluster; Nardi steering wheel; Air Lift Performance 3P suspension system; MPC Motorsport droplinks; custom Mugen M7 split rims.

SHOW US WHAT YOU'VE GOT!

Here's your chance to show off both your ride and your photography skills in the pages of *FC*. To enter your car just open a fresh new email, put 'Readers' Rides Submission' in the subject line and send us a few pics of the best bits (larger than 1MB with no ghosting or logos, and you must have the photographer's permission) along with a short spec and a paragraph telling us why your motor deserves to adorn these hallowed pages. Ping the whole lot over to jules.truss@kelsey.co.uk and we'll do the rest.



READERS' RIDES



➔ TOM DENHAM'S CORSA VXR NÜRBURGRING

FC says: The Nürburgring-badged Corsa VXR is well known for being one of the most exciting Vauxhalls to grace the planet for many years indeed, thanks to its killer power-to-weight ratio and fantastic chassis that makes it fully track-ready out of the box.

Tom here has celebrated this fact by only further enhancing his stunning white example so it's even more of an animal and is also capable of giving far more intimidating metal a run for its money in the process. Aiming big from the start, that boosted 1.6-litre motor was fully forged internally with new sturdier con rods and pistons, before an RSS-designed

K04 turbocharger kit – complete with matching manifold and downpipe – were added into the mix. Also featuring far more comprehensive fuelling and cooling systems, the result is a little Corsa with enough clout to keep even a supercar honest! That six-speed 'box has also been strengthened to ensure it can take the extra power with the likes of a Stage 3 clutch, RSS flywheel and M-Tech short shifter, which only confirm Tom's diehard passion for driving thrills. Aside from a few choice touches, the car's styling remains refreshingly reserved, giving the Vauxhall a suave but purposeful road presence.

Main mods:

Forged engine with PEC con rods and pistons; RSS K04 turbo conversion with Dbilas manifold and downpipe; AEM cold air intake; Milltek exhaust; Airtec intercooler; RSS alloy radiator; RSS air con delete; RSS 630cc fuel injectors; RSS high-flow fuel pump; NGK spark plugs; 3bar MAP sensor; cool running thermostat; RSS Stage 3 clutch; RSS flywheel; M-Tech short shifter; Vibratronics engine/gearbox mounts; OMP/Enhance Performance strut braces.



BRIAN DODD'S CLIO V6

FC says: It's not often you see a modified Clio V6 (in fact, it's not often you see a Clio V6 full-stop these days!), so Brian's race-inspired beauty here is a real treat for the eyes.

His silver example of this squat, mid-engined icon has been gradually transformed to resemble the infamous V6 Trophy race cars these road-based machines were loosely based on, to the extent he now has something of a retro racer-for-the-road on his hands!

First snapping up a set of Cromodora Mag alloys (the very wheels used on the aforementioned race cars), things were soon taken a step further as Brian sourced a replica front splitter and rear spoiler from the very same competitive machines (he explains original examples are no longer available).

Sitting lower on some KW coilovers, it was clear to see a seriously formidable car was soon taking shape, with Brian topping off the aesthetics with a full race livery inspired by the cars entering the Catalunya round of the V6 Trophy back in the day.

Inside, the classy cabin has been treated to some custom Cobra RSR leather bucket seats which look nothing short of epic, as well as an Alcantara Sparco race steering wheel and full plumbed-in fire extinguisher system.

Performance-wise, there's two-piece brake discs up front and an ITG intake system unlocks more power from that burbling V6 engine out back. Nice work!

Main mods:

KW V3 coilovers; Cromodora Mag alloys wheels; two-piece front brake discs; custom Cobra RSR retro bucket seats with TRS harnesses; Sparco RS steering wheels; plumbed-in fire extinguisher system; ITG Canister intake; V6 Trophy-style front splitter and rear spoiler; Catalunya V6 Trophy-inspired livery.

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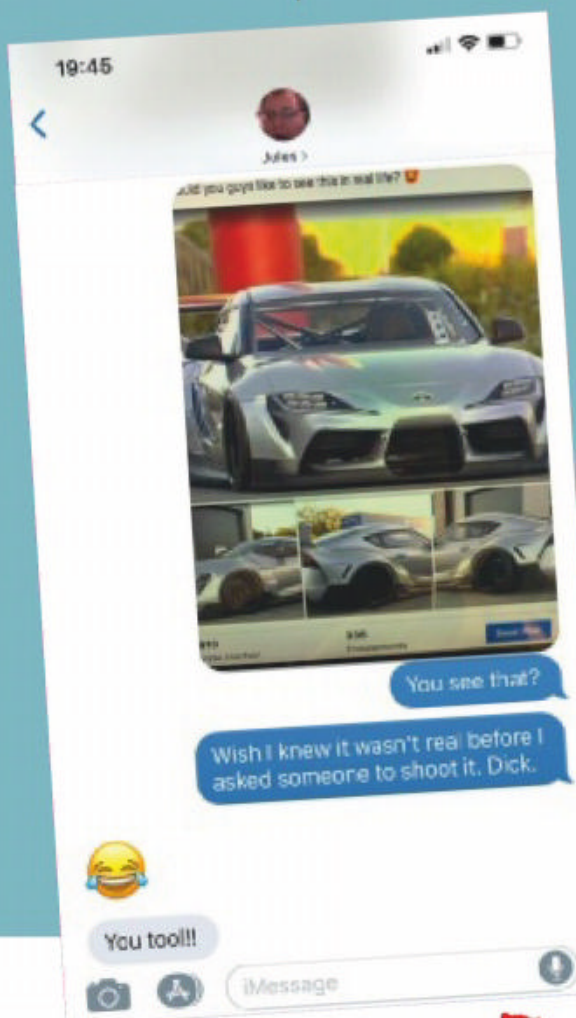
Quotes of the Month:



Midge: "I asked for an extra copy of the mag and they sent me this. I know I'm fat, but they didn't have to take the piss."



Jules: "Finally, I've found a hotel that can cater for my needs!"



So wrong

We've seen some pretty despicable behaviour from Midge in our time, but this one really does take the biscuit... or very much not take the biscuit, depending on how you look at it. Yes, we're ashamed to say that IS a salad. Disgusting! Not that he couldn't do with eating a few more of those nowadays of course.



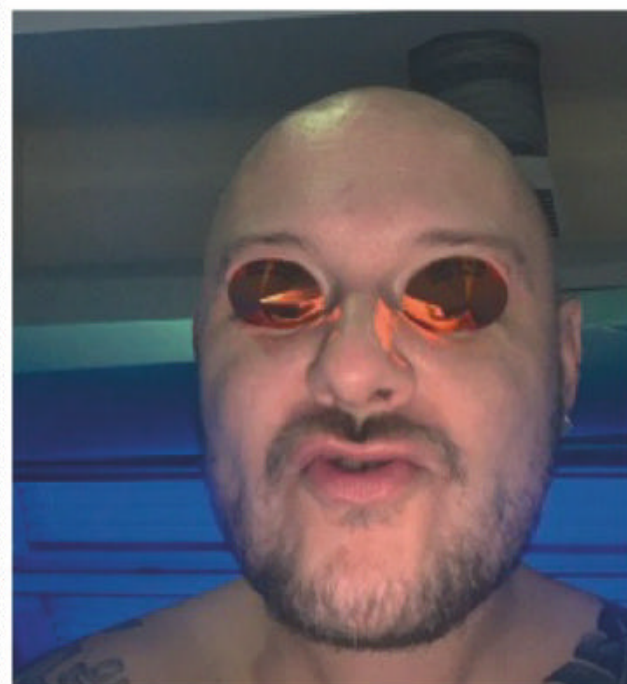
Wax on - wax off

Our Glenda had to go into hospital for a small shaving procedure this month. Don't worry it's nothing serious, not unless you count the, and we quote; "awesome Karate robe they've given me." We can only assume that he thinks he looks like some sort of kung fu expert here... even though he more closely-resembles your dad in his dressing gown.



Working hard boss?

Yes, the boss would have you believe that he got up early and then spent the day humping around cameras and schmoozing clients at the recent Auto Finesse Detailing Academy launch (see the news section). We know different though, a picture can never tell a lie!



So wrong (again)

Send us a hot pic for the Ed page we said, and as helpfully as ever, this is what we got. Now, you know when you send a snap and only after do you realise what you've just done? Well, that's about the size of it. No mate, you can't take it back! (Leave him alone, he hasn't been on holiday for a week – Jules)



TOP 5 VIDEOS

CHECK OUT MORE @ WWW.FASTCAR.CO.UK



CARBON SUPRA

The big bad Toyota is still a proper legend on the streets, but what's cooler than a Supra? A full carbon Supra of course. Fast, furious and 'effin featherweight!
www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/carbon-fibre-toyota-supra/



BAGGED CLASSIC FERRARI 348TS

And there was us thinking we'd seen absolutely everything when it comes to bagged supercars. As it turns out, we hadn't.
www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/bagged-ferrari-348ts/



BIKE-POWERED CINQUECENTO

We had a baby Fiat on the team once. It was rather rubbish compared to this Kawasaki ZX10-R powered monster.
www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/kawasaki-zx10-fiat-cinquecento/

Text of The Month

Poor old Midge, he doesn't understand this new-fangled computer-generated stuff. Yet another tech-savvy fail!



Say whaaaat?

We like the ol' asparagi as much as the next extremely healthy collection of manly specimens... but not so much when it's been freshly dicked! Nice one Tesco, that definitely made us look twice!



Modify everything

The boys may take great pleasure in rebuking Jules for his spanner swinging skills, but there's no denying that the big man is the absolute master when it comes to proper mantool-toting, DIY antics. That said, only our Jules could think of constructing vinyl wrapped, LED-lit office furniture - Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen eat your dodgy barnet out! Come to think of it too, he's done more work on THAT desk than he ever has on any other desk... if you catch our drift (Midge, my office now! - Jules).



1600WHP JEEP

We're not normally the biggest fans of big ol' Jeeps but we can't help loving this one. Every good off-roader should have a parachute in our book. www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/1600whp-jeep-srt8/



FLAT4JAPAN BUG

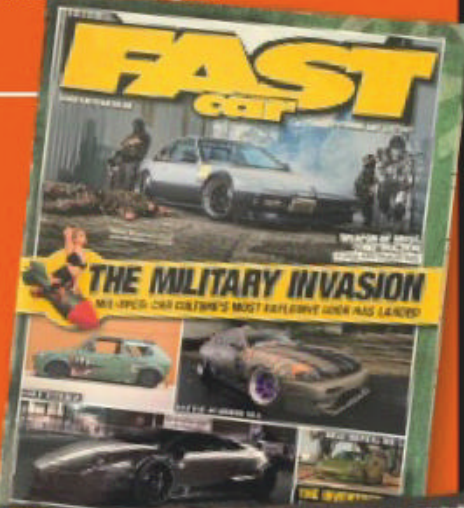
Well you certainly don't see classic Beetles prowling the streets of Japan every day. That said, as is the rules over there, this is no ordinary Bug! www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/the-flat-4-japan-volkswagen-beetle/

BLAST FROM THE PAST

ISSUE 329 - MAY 2015

4-years and 78 issues ago...

- Our Mil-Spec special was the first of its kind anywhere in the world... people still talk about Mil-Spec today!
- Satomi-san's S14 remains one of the most bonkers rides to ever come out of Japan. Wings made of number plates indeed, what a ledge!
- We loved the idea of the issue so much, we actually went out and built a whole car for the cover. Damn we miss that Prelude, sad times.
- Sam Bowden proved to be quite the pin-up girl... she definitely got a few things up we can tell you!
- Yannick's MX-5 was dubbed 'Filthy Penny', the down and dirty little minx!
- We went all the way to snowy Colorado to shoot James' utterly mad Mk1 Golf. Will sharks teeth and olive drab ever be uncool? We doubt it!
- Liberty Walk built a Lambo, what's new? You might be thinking... but this one was new in 2015, and it nearly knackered the internet!
- Charles Dugger's was the first (and the last) Crossfire we've ever had in FC. A bit more Batman than G.I. Joe, granted, but still an awesome bit of kit.



NEXT ISSUE

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